AUGUST, 1936

THE COMMUNIST

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THE
COMMUNIST
A Magazine of the Theory and Practice of Marxism-Leninism

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Vol. XV AUGUST, 1936 No. 8

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Entered as second class matter November 2, 1927, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Make all checks, money orders, and correspondence to THE COMMUNIST, P.O. Box 148, Sta. D (50 E. 13th St.), New York. Subscription rates $2 a year; $1 for six months; foreign and Canada $2.50 a year. Single copies 20c.

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OUR BANNER BEARERS

Earl Browder, Communist Presidential Candidate, and James W. Ford, Communist Vice-Presidential Candidate

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Review of the Month

Elections Issues Are Becoming Clearer—Browder Formulates Issues as Reaction or Progress, Democracy or Fascism—Socialists Are in Doubt—Roosevelt's Middle Course at Democratic Convention—Reaction and Progress in Democratic Party—Pressure Upon Roosevelt and Independent Political Action—Fighting Capitalism and Fighting Facism—The Hillman-Thomas Dispute—The New York American Labor Party—Organizing Steel and Defending Landon—Coughlin Is Building a Fascist Party—Lemke, Landon's Stooge—Crisis in the Townsend Movement—The National Convention of National Union for Social Justice—Tasks and Responsibilities of Labor's Non-Partisan League—The Line and Message of the Ninth Convention—Our Candidates and Our Leaders—The Communist Election Campaign

THE ISSUES of the election struggle are daily becoming clearer to the American people. As the Ninth Communist Party Convention states: It is reaction or progress, democracy or fascism. This may still not be clear to Norman Thomas and others, but it is becoming evident to organized labor, to the toiling farmers and sections of the middle classes, and to all progressive forces in the country.

A further illustration of what the real issues are is offered by the Democratic Party Convention. For some of the "Left" Socialists, who unblushingly repeat Trotskyist counter-revolutionary tripe, the mere effort to understand the meaning of the Democratic Party Convention would by itself constitute conclusive evidence of opportunism. Yet facts are facts. The struggle that took place in and around the Democratic Party Convention demonstrates certain important things to the working class and to the camp of progress.

What are they?

In distinction to the Republican Party Convention, which wiped out almost completely all traces of progressive, "small men" influence, the Democratic Party Convention saw a determined effort by the progressive elements to put their stamp upon the platform and policies of the party. We shall see later with how much success.

Much as the high command of the Democratic Party would wish to ignore it, the fact is that their Convention in Philadelphia was violently shaken by internal struggles among three main currents. We list them: (1) the Smith-Raskob outfit and the closely related group of Talmadge and the Southern "Constitutionalists";

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(2) the Roosevelt-New Deal group, and (3) the progressive and labor elements. It was the struggle and relative strength of these three main currents that determined the outcome of the Convention.

It would be sheer stupidity to repeat parrot-like, as some "Militant" Socialists do, the Republican evaluation of the Convention. And it is equally stupid, as some Right-Wing Socialists do, to swallow uncritically everything that the Roosevelt current wants the people to think of the Convention. There is such a thing as an objective, working class evaluation of the Convention, and that we should try to achieve.

Smith, Raskob, and Talmadge were not in the Convention, but the reactionary forces in the Democratic Party which these gentlemen lead tried to exert a most powerful influence upon its deliberations. The Smith-Raskob telegram-letter to the delegates of the Convention was only the most dramatic expression of these reactionary efforts on the eve of the Philadelphia gathering. And what did these forces want? They wanted a Liberty League platform and candidate for the Democratic Party. To achieve this aim, the Smith-Raskob forces had been trying months in advance to shift arbitrarily the election issues to such grounds as they thought offered them a chance of winning. They had tried hard (and are still continuing) to shift the issue from reaction or progress—what it really is—to capitalism or socialism—what it is not, with all due respect to Norman Thomas.

The Smith-Raskob trick was almost transparent. If you could make people believe that the outcome of this election struggle would directly decide for America the issue of capitalism or socialism; and if next you could make the city middle classes and farmers, the more or less well-to-do, believe that Roosevelt and the New Deal stand for socialism as against capitalism—then, the Smith-Raskob crew figured, the election would be in the bag—in the bag held by the Liberty League, by Morgan-du Pont, by Hearst.

This sort of figuring rested upon the assumption, not altogether wrong, that large sections of the well-to-do middle classes of city and farm are afraid of socialism and, confronted by the alternative *today* (an alternative which does not exist, not yet), would stand with capitalism and with those political parties that can show themselves as the best champions of capitalism.

It will be seen that this is the strategy of the Republican Party. Which is only additional proof of the fact that the Liberty League is the general staff of extreme capitalist reaction and that the Republican Party is following out the directives of the staff.

Consequently, the first thing to be noted about the Democratic Party Convention is that there the Liberty League and the Smith-Raskob crowd suffered an ignominious defeat. It is all very well

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for the Republican press to scream that the Philadelphia Convention was made up overwhelmingly of Democratic office holders, helpless pawns in Farley's hands. There may be some truth in that, though there is more jealousy for the rival's jobs in these screams than anxiety for the truth.

But what is really important is this: in the Republican Convention the Liberty League scored a complete triumph. It had nearly everything its own way: candidate, platform and party; whereas in the Democratic Convention the Liberty League suffered a defeat on the candidate for president—a complete defeat, although the Liberty League can still derive some comfort from the fact that Garner is the candidate for Vice-President. On the platform—almost a complete defeat. And as regards influence in the party—only a partial defeat. Roosevelt remains the head of the party. This may mean much or little, depending upon many circumstances, including the way in which Roosevelt will choose to fight the reactionaries in his own party. On this score, therefore, the Smith-Raskob crowd has all the reasons in the world to be worried. Yet on the score of influence upon state and local Democratic organizations, and on the score of influence *in the next Congress*, the Liberty League has much in the Democratic Party that can give reaction much comfort and confidence.

The second thing to be noted in the Democratic Convention is the serious fight put up by the progressive and labor elements to bolster up Roosevelt and to push him a bit to the Left. This fight was partially successful. Very partially. It no doubt contributed a good deal towards insuring the defeat of the Liberty League maneuvers in and around the Convention. It demonstrated to Roosevelt that there was considerable militancy and strength in the progressive and labor elements which must be seriously reckoned with, and thus kept Roosevelt from moving to the Right. It was finally instrumental in injecting an audibly progressive note in the Democratic platform.

Whatever credit there is in these achievements (and there is some), John L. Lewis can rightly claim a good deal of it. Yet the class conscious American workers, and the more advanced progressive elements, might and should ask the question: Could not more have been achieved through independent organization and action by labor and its allies? Is it not evident now that even the limited job of bolstering up Roosevelt against the onslaughts of reaction, of pushing him to the Left, would have been accomplished much more successfully had Lewis, Hillman, and their collaborators *at the very start* proceeded in an independent way, as we had pointed out time and time again? As to what is required for the bigger job of defeating reaction, we shall return to it in a while.

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The third thing to be noted as regards the Democratic Convention is the studied course of the "middle-of-the-way" followed by Roosevelt and the New Deal group at the Convention. This is the course that won in the platform and in Roosevelt's acceptance speech. About this course only one thing can be said definitely. It lies somewhere in the middle between reaction and the camp of progress. But where exactly? That is hard to tell. It is a position which is bound to shift with each change in the alignment of class forces. Heavy pressure from the camp of reaction without corresponding or even stronger pressure from the camp of progress will shift the middle course to the Right. Independent organization and action by labor and its allies, on the economic and political fields, independent action that goes in the direction of a Farmer-Labor Party, may keep Roosevelt put in the present middle course or even push him a bit to the Left. And the more independent action the better. But the "middle course" itself is a very uncertain and unsafe thing. It is not and cannot be labor's course, although labor can and should make all possible use of it to defeat reaction and to strengthen its own independent positions. This and this alone is the way of progress for the American people.

Reacting apparently against the tendency of some in the labor movement to make Roosevelt's "middle course" their own, and to identify themselves with the New Deal, certain "Militant" Socialists have been inclined to laugh away the "middle course" altogether and even to class Roosevelt together with Landon. To continue to do so is not only childish, it is to play into the hands of reaction. That's what the Trotskyists are doing. They are doing it also in France, as is well known.

True Socialists will understand that, as between capitalism and socialism, Roosevelt's course *is not the middle*. There is no "middle" between these. Roosevelt stands frankly for capitalism and against socialism. And if that were the issue today, that is, if we were facing the socialist revolution and the struggle for power, a course like Roosevelt's would constitute the main obstacle to the victory of socialism, and would have to be fought as such.

But . . . and here is the rub. The issue today is not the socialist revolution versus capitalism. That is what the Liberty League would like the people to believe. This issue is, as demonstrated also in the Democratic Convention, reaction or progress, fascism or democracy. And it is as between *these two* that the Roosevelt current in the Democratic Party seeks to steer a middle course.

What is the correct working class attitude to this middle course?

It is, first of all, to realize clearly that it *is* a middle course between Landon-Hearst and the genuine camp of progress.

It is, secondly, to realize fully that just because it is a middle

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course between reaction and progress, it is no barrier to reaction and fascism. The working class cannot accept the declaration of Governer Earle that "the Democratic Party is our nation's main bulwark today against the advancing forces of Big-Business Fascism". It is not. Only the Farmer-Labor Party will build up such a bulwark.

The Right-Wing Socialist *Forward* (June 25) is doing a disservice to the cause of struggle against reaction when it undertakes to show that Roosevelt has now the opportunity to make of the Democratic Party "a Progressive Party", which presumably makes unnecessary the building of the Farmer-Labor Party. Many elements and sections of the present Democratic Party will find their way into the genuine progressive camp. But that camp will be organized and made fully effective against reaction only by the independent and leading activities of labor, by the building up of the Farmer-Labor Party. It may be all right for the liberal *New York Post* (June 24) to speak of a "political miracle" in Philadelphia and to treat the Democratic Party as a *substitute* for the Farmer-Labor Party. But the same thing does not sit well on people who call themselves Socialists.

We had a right to expect something better from the "Militant" Socialists, from the *Socialist Call*. But what do we get? Speaking of Roosevelt's acceptance speech, it says:

> "It is this defense of the profit system which brands Roosevelt as the defender of capitalism." (July 4.)

An earth-shaking discovery. Roosevelt is for capitalism. Did he ever say he was for anything else? It was Norman Thomas who for a while argued that the New Deal was "a step to Socialism", but not Roosevelt.

But the *Socialist Call* will not be restrained. It goes on:

> "Roosevelt's 'liberalism' cannot conceal the fundamental capitalist character of his philosophy. On this basic issue, the masses of the American people will have to pass judgment." (*Ibid.*)

Come on, comrades of the *Socialist Call*. Be grown up and serious.

Do you really mean to tell the American people that Norman Thomas has a chance to be elected president in 1936 and that, if he is elected, the building of socialism in the United States *will be begun this year?* You surely cannot mean that. You cannot mean that and remain true to your own draft program which, though faulty in many respects, says correctly that socialism is impossible without the socialist revolution. Or, will you maintain that America has already entered the period of socialist revolution?

The full picture of the Socialist Party official position is something like this. It accepts under Trotskyist pressure the issue of the

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elections as fixed by the Liberty League—socialism versus capitalism. Then it proceeds in a reformist way to promise socialism in 1936, socialism without the socialist revolution.

Result is: main attack on Roosevelt instead of Landon, similar to the line of Coughlin and Gerald K. Smith. And whom does this help? Not socialism.

The correct position on Roosevelt and his middle course requires, thirdly, the utilization of this middle course for the defeat of Landon and for the building up of the independent economic and political power of the workers and their allies—the organization of the unorganized and the building of the Farmer-Labor Party.

* * *

FROM this point of view the launching of a New York state organization and ticket by Labor's Non-Partisan League is a development full of promise and possibility. It is frankly launched for the election of Roosevelt and Lehman, and there are elements in the League who are at present interested in nothing else. Yet there are others who definitely aim at the building up of a Labor Party—that is, utilizing the very pro-Roosevelt sentiment in order to break the masses away from the capitalist parties and setting them on a course of political independence.

With the League as such we have one central thing in common—the defeat of Landon and the struggle against reaction. But we urge a critical attitude to Roosevelt and a political line independent of him and his middle course. That is why we have much more in common with the more advanced elements in the League who share our views to a greater or lesser extent that the only real bulwark against reaction and fascism is the Farmer-Labor Party.

This is the solid basis upon which cooperation can take place between Labor's Non-Partisan League and the more advanced Labor Party forces of which the Communists are an integral and inseparable part.

The New York state and city organizations of the Communist Party have done the right thing by addressing the corresponding organizations of the Socialist Party with a view to securing an exchange of opinions on the situation. The aim of our comrades is to win the Socialists to a correct position on Labor's Non-Partisan League. This is called for by the interests of the labor movement.

Sidney Hillman has correctly criticized one phase of Norman Thomas' position, namely, the indifference to a Landon-Hearst victory in 1936. This criticism would have been much more effective had it been followed by a self-criticism of Labor's Non-Partisan League for its failure to step forward much sooner in the season

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on the road of independent political action. In such an eventuality, Coughlin, Lemke, and Gerald K. Smith would not have succeeded as much as they did in befuddling large groups of the middle class and some workers in the interests of Landon and of even more open fascist adventurers.

Yet, there is one point which Hillman and Thomas seem to hold in common. And they happen to be wrong. Both seem to assume that if you want to fight fascism and reaction, you must abandon, at least temporarily, the fight against capitalism. And since we are not yet in the period of socialist revolution, this means giving up the fight against capitalist exploitation.

Here is how Thomas puts it:

> "Under these circumstances our duty is clear. The fight is a fight between socialism and capitalism. *There is no emergency to force us temporarily to forget that basic struggle.*" (*Socialist Call*, July 4. Our emphasis—A. B.)

Did Hillman challenge this wrong conception? No! At the Camp Tamiment discussion, Hillman expressed himself as follows:

> "I was hurt today when I read in *The New York Times* a statement by a speaker at the Socialist Convention who said it is dangerous to turn from fighting capitalism to fighting fascism. Mr. Norman Thomas says this notwithstanding the experience of Germany, the experience of Italy and despite what is going on in France today. . . . *He sits back and says this is not the time to fight fascism; let us fight capitalism even if the forces of fascism will get hold of governing power.*" (*New Leader*, July 4. Our emphasis—A. B.)

Does Hillman share the view of Thomas that in order to defeat Landon and Hearst labor is forced to give up temporarily the fight against capitalist exploitation? It is hard to believe that Hillman, especially as a trade union leader, would in *practice* make such a conclusion. Yet the underscored part of his statement would imply an acceptance of the wrong Thomas conception in theory.

In practice, what do we see? The fight against Landon and Hearst is a fight against the most powerful and most reactionary circles of monopoly capital—against the Morgans, du Ponts, etc. What is the steel drive, if not a mobilization and strengthening of the forces of labor against capitalist exploitation in the most strategic industry in the country? And a successful steel drive means strength for labor, not only in steel, *but in all industries*. It means strengthening the working class *as a class*.

And will Thomas maintain that the steel drive is incompatible with the fight to defeat Landon? On the contrary, both go hand in hand, one helps the other, *one is a condition for the success of the other*. This is the practice. This is also the theory. Then what remains of Thomas' contention that to fight fascism today means to give up

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the fight against capitalism? Nothing but a reformist fallacy that fascism is different from the rule of the most reactionary and dominating forces in the capitalist class.

This is not to say that there may not be tendencies that would adocate slackening, for example, the steel drive, on the false assumption that this may help to defeat Landon. No doubt there are such tendencies, as there still are tendencies to go slow on independent political action on the same false assumption that this may be a better way of defeating Landon. But life, not only theory, has already exploded these and similar assumptions. And labor is fast learning from life as well as from correct theory.

Certainly, Thomas' idea of a possible "emergency" which would justify us "temporarily to forget" the struggle against capitalism is sheer reformism and is not going to help us put straight those wrong tendencies that may be inclined to forget that struggle. In fact, Thomas' theory would tend to justify such forgetfulness.

It is time to abandon this theory and to join with us in carrying out a consistent class line against reaction and capitalist exploitation. The letter of our New York organization to the Socialist Party of New York sent by Comrade Krumbein points the way to joint action against reaction and the building of the Farmer-Labor Party.

* * *

THE Townsend movement is in a crisis. And the people who created it and brought it to a head at the national convention of the movement in Cleveland (July 15-18) are Coughlin and Gerald K. Smith.

What are the elements of the crisis? Coughlin and Storm-Troop Smith set out consciously and deliberately to destroy the movement as one of the struggle for old age pensions and to transform it, or as much of it as they can, into a weapon of reaction and fascism. Smith's proposals to build up Storm Troops cap the fascist efforts of these two adventurers.

The moves of Coughlin and Smith toward this objective included: Forget about old age pensions and talk about "recovery". This is the true meaning of the transformation of the movement into a "recovery" movement.

Arouse the wildest national chauvinism and jingoism, a la Hearst. Call for war upon Mexico and press the American government to give aid to Hitler for his adventures in Europe, especially against the Soviet Union. This is the true meaning of Coughlin's and Smith's orations about "liberty" of conscience and about rendering aid to the "persecuted" believers in Mexico.

Destroy Roosevelt and help elect Landon. Lemke is the guy to do it with. Though the convention could not be got formally to

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endorse Lemke, everything was done by Coughlin and Smith to stampede the Townsend movement to Lemke. And it is not their fault that only 6,000 persons or thereabouts showed up to the grand finale which Lemke addressed.

Hearst's hand and that of the Liberty League were written all over the activities of Coughlin and Smith. Hearst's agents were right in the convention hall to direct Smith.

The Storm Troop organization which Smith sets out to organize among the Townsend youth typifies and explains the fascist designs of these hirelings of the reactionary monopolies and Wall Street speculators.

All this was coming, and only blind ones could fail to see it. At the very inception of the Townsend movement, the Communist Party pointed out that the movement had in itself possibilities both for good and evil. It had—and still has—possibilities for a mass struggle for old age pensions and social security, and for a Farmer-Labor Party. But it also had possibilities for becoming the victim of reaction and fascist adventurers. We pointed out further that the decisive force in making this movement a source of strength to the camp of labor and progress was the independent political action of labor itself, labor's championship of the demand of old age pensions which gave rise to the Townsend movement.

The Communist Party, through its correct position and work, did a good deal to develop the possibilities for good, to combat the efforts of the reactionaries. But organized labor, not even the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League, did not adopt the correct attitude. And this it was that made it so much easier for Coughlin and Smith to do what they did.

Why, even during the convention itself, when Coughlin's fascist game became transparently clear, Norman Thomas could find nothing better to tell the Townsend delegates than that their plan is no good. He found nothing better to do than to preach abstract socialism. No wonder the *Herald Tribune* found it possible to praise the honesty of Thomas.

What are the prospects and immediate tasks? It is clear that Coughlin and Smith have not yet captured the Townsend movement —its clubs and membership—although they have managed to disrupt the Convention and to confuse many delegates. *The fight is now among the membership.* And our call to them is: Save your old age pension movement from the fascist adventurers—Coughlin and Gerald Smith. Turn away from Lemke, Landon's stooge, and help defeat Landon. Join with labor and the toiling farmers for independent action, for old age pensions, unemployment insurance and social security.

Now more than ever before, Labor's Non-Partisan League in

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collaborating with the Farmer-Labor forces should undertake to rally *nationally* as well as by states, the Townsendites, Coughlinites and all forces of labor and progress for joint action on a common platform. A national gathering against reaction is the imperative need of the hour.

For the members of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League the situation calls for the most intensive work in the Townsend clubs along the above lines. Special practical concentration must be given to (1) winning the Townsend clubs for joint action with labor and other progressive forces in the localities and states for the election of independent *candidates to Congress* that will put up a real fight for genuine old age pensions; (2) winning and helping to organize the Townsend youth as a progressive force, a force to combat the fascist maneuvers of Storm-Troop Smith; (3) away from Lemke, the Landon stooge; and (4) for genuine inner democracy in the Townsend organization.

* * *

THE National Union for Social Justice will hold its national convention in Cleveland, August 15-18.

It is obvious that Coughlin will try to use this convention to boost Lemke in order to elect Landon in 1936 and to lay the basis for the building up of a mass fascist movement in this country. Coughlin himself, when pressed for an answer, admitted in effect that Lemke had no chance of being elected (*Social Justice*, June 29). This is the weakest spot in Coughlin's fascist armor. This is the point upon which will occur in the convention the greatest distrust to Coughlin's Lemke maneuver. The Coughlin mass following does not want Landon and fears justly that support for Lemke means support for Landon. This therefore is the point of concentration of all progressive forces against the Coughlin-Lemke maneuver.

Coughlin will seek to strengthen his Congressional campaign. He will seek to utilize the Convention for insuring the election of reactionary and fascist candidates to Congress on the tickets of the Republican and Democratic parties. There are already signs of opposition to the sort of candidates for Congress that Coughlin is forcing upon the membership of the organization. There is growing opposition to the reactionary and corrupt character of these candidates and to the dictatorial way in which Coughlin forces his will upon the local and Congressional units of the National Union for Social Justice. This incipient opposition can and should be developed into a progressive

Coughlin will seek to arouse a spirit of jingoism and fascist force in the organization against the fascist tricks of Coughlin.
terrorism against the progressive forces of the country. Maybe he will do it more cautiously than at the Townsend convention. Maybe he

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will use more polite language when speaking of President Roosevelt. It is also possible that, as a result of the Vatican's forced rebuff to Coughlin's lack of restraint in the choice of epithets, the fascist priest will make himself less conspicuous. All this is possible and much more. Yet the forces in the National Union for Social Justice that work for fascism are not confined to Coughlin himself. There are the forces behind Coughlin (reactionary and fascist-minded Wall Street speculators), and those closely around him, that will undertake to do the job.

The membership of the Union for Social Justice do not want fascism, just as the American people detest fascism. Only not all of them recognize as yet fascism when they see it. At the Townsend Convention Coughlin and his crony, Gerald Smith, exposed themselves for what they are—fascists. And Coughlin's apology to Roosevelt cannot do away with this fact. The Convention of the Union for Social Justice will have to face this fact and draw from it the proper conclusion.

What is that conclusion?

Destroy Coughlin's dictatorship in the organization. Make it democratic. Give the membership full say in its affairs—political, financial, and others.

Adopt a program of specific and practical demands that will really give effect to the aspirations of the membership for social justice. Such demands as: Nationalization of the banks and a central bank of issue democratically controlled. Begin with the nationalization and democratic management of the banking kingdoms of Morgan, Rockefeller, Mellon, Kuhn, Loeb & Co.

Government guarantee and responsibility for a job to every worker and a minimum annual wage. Trade union conditions. Organization of the unorganized workers into trade unions. Struggle for higher wages. Support for the organizing drive of the C.I.O. in the steel industry and for the organizing drives in the auto, rubber, radio, and textile industries. For the unity of the American Federation of Labor on the basis of industrial unionism and inner democracy. Old age pensions. Unemployment and social insurance. Realization of the demands of the American Youth Congress as embodied in the Youth Act.

For the farmers:

(a) Creation of a federal fund of three billion dollars by a special levy on high fortunes and incomes to refinance at nominal interest farm mortgages and homes of small owners; (b) land and implements to be supplied by the federal government to all landless farmers, tenants and sharecroppers; (c) government guarantee to the toiling farmers of cost of production plus fair profit.

Civil liberties and freedom of conscience. Recall all state and

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federal legislation infringing upon the constitutional liberties of the people. Demand the immediate dissolution of all company guards and spying organizations.

Maintain peace. Collaborate with the peace movements of this country (labor, churches, farm organizations, peace movements) in the effort to maintain world peace and to reduce armaments. The American people have shown their opposition to war and to any help or encouragement by the United States to such war-making governments as the Japanese, as Hitler's and Mussolini's.

This is a program of specific demands that will enable the membership of the National Union for Social Justice to fight for justice for the people—the workers, farmers, middle classes.

Coughlin and Lemke prefer mouthing vague generalities about "principles" of justice while corralling the people for fascist ends—for the ends of Wall Street speculators.

The membership of the Union should utilize this convention to assert its own democratic rights, to adopt a program of demands that will best serve their interests, and to cooperate with labor and all other progressive forces in the fight against the enemies of the people—locally and nationally—the Landons, Hearsts, Lemkes.

Utilize this convention to promote the struggle for a real people's party—the Farmer-Labor Party.

* * *

WILL organized labor, especially the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League, finally turn its attention to its duty regarding the National Union for Social Justice?

Or will the spokesmen of organized labor ignore it, as they did at the Townsend convention, and let Coughlin and Storm-Troop Smith freely operate there for fascist ends?

After what happened at the Townsend Convention, Lewis and Hillman (is there any use in appealing to Green?) can no longer afford to ignore these movements. Yes, they can ignore the Townsend and Coughlin movements, *but only by assuming complete responsibility for the growing fascism in this country*. We declare with a full realization of what these words mean that continued failure on the part of the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League to appeal directly to the Townsend movement and now especially to the National Union Convention for joint action against reaction—defeat of Landon—and for common struggle for common demands will make the leaders of these labor organizations directly responsible for whatever success reaction and fascism may achieve in the Townsend and Coughlin movements.

This is no new question. More than a year ago our Party signalized these dangers. It pointed out, through its press and its

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leaders, Comrades Foster and Browder, that only the organization of a Farmer-Labor Party can serve as a bulwark to reaction and fascism, *that only a Farmer-Labor Party can and will prevent the fascists from building up a mass party of fascism.*

The spokesmen of organized labor, most particularly the reactionary wing, attacked our proposal for a Labor Party as a "Moscow" invention. The more progressive elements remained hesitant and counseled caution and delay. The result: no national Farmer-Labor Party today. The consequence: the fascists, Coughlin and Gerald Smith, step in and undertake to capitalize the traditionally progressive third party movements in order to build a mass fascist party in the service of Wall Street speculators—the Lemke party.

True, the fascists have no easy sailing. It was not easy at the Townsend convention. It was practically defeated at the convention of the Farmers' Holiday Association. It will not be easy either at the convention of the National Union for Social Justice. But this happened despite the passivity and indifference of Lewis and Hillman. The Communists and other progressive forces helped to bring it about. Pro-Roosevelt Democrats—not Labor's Non-Partisan League—had a share in that at the Townsend Convention. Above all, the healthy distrust of the masses towards Lemke and their hatred of fascism—this is what helps. But not the leaders of organized labor.

Yet, it is precisely organized labor and its independent action that will win the middle classes to progressive action and prevent them from falling victim to fascist adventurers.

We say therefore again to the spokesmen of organized labor and especially to the leaders of the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League:

Make a direct appeal to the Coughlin and Townsend movements and show them that labor is with the mass following of these movements in their aspirations and struggles for social justice (not the Coughlin kind), old age pensions, and social security.

Invite these movements for cooperation in the Congressional elections and nationally.

Propose a national congress against reaction and for the people.

Thus and only thus will the defeat of Landon be insured and the independent power of the masses be mobilized against the offensive of reaction and against fascism.

* * *

THIS is the line and the message that came out of the Ninth National Convention of the Communist Party of America. This —and the national candidates of the Party, its standard bearers— Browder and Ford.

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What came out is a program of action for the American working class and all friends of progress. What came out was a convincing demonstration that the Communist Party is becoming in fact, as distinguished from aspiration, the vanguard of the American working class. The wide masses are beginning to recognize and appreciate this fact. It is this that makes our Party a potent factor in the struggle against reaction, for the Farmer-Labor Party, for building up the power of the masses, especially the working class, in the coming struggle for socialism.

Norman Thomas wonders where we got our "supreme confidence" in our ability to go with our class—the working class—in the fight for its immediate burning interests (defeat of Landon), *at the same time* promoting, not the abstract preachment of socialism, but building power for the socialist revolution which alone can bring socialism.

The answer, Comrade Thomas, is: life itself has already proved that our policies are correct. And they were proved correct because they rest upon the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. They rest upon the historic decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International correctly applied to the practical and specific problems facing the American people. They rest upon the same decisions whose application in France enabled the French masses to achieve the successes they did; whose application in Spain enables now the Spanish masses to fight successfully against the fascist counter-revolution and to establish more firmly the rule of the People's Front and the leadership of the working class in it.

And why is Comrade Thomas lacking this confidence? Because life has begun to show that his orientation is wrong. And why? Because it rests upon the shaky foundation of reformism, sectarianism and counter-revolutionary Trotskyism.

It is time, Comrade Thomas, to begin to revise that orientation; for if you allow life itself to make that revision, all sorts of difficulties are likely to develop. In fact, they are already beginning to develop.

Perhaps now it is clearer for the Socialists that the appeal of our Party for joint consultations addressed to their last Convention was not so "out of the way" after all. It is still not too late.

The united front between Socialists and Communists is now more needed than ever before.

We will march confidently along the road mapped out by our Ninth Convention. We will confidently build the power of the working class and of its vanguard—the Communist Party. For our policies have been proved correct, and at the head of our Party stand Foster and Browder.

This is how we will unfold our election struggle, on the largest possible scale, with our magnificent platform and with our candidates—Browder and Ford. A. B.

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The Struggle for Workers' and Peasants' Alliances in Spain

THE question of strengthening and organizing throughout the country the workers' and peasants' alliances, which are the main buttress of the People's Front, is now the central point of discussion among the workers' organizations in Spain.*

A serious change has taken place in the position of the Left wing of the Socialist Party, which was against creating workers' alliances, considering them to be only organs of uprising.

Proof of this is to be found in the moods of the members of the Left wing of the Socialist Party. A number of Socialist organizations endorsed the draft of the program of the party drawn up by the Madrid organization, and are demanding that still greater stress be laid upon the need for establishing workers' and peasants' alliances.

Comrade Carrillo, secretary of the Young Socialist League, wrote an interesting article on the question of the "alliances" in the newspaper *Claridad* (May 13) in which he emphasized the point that for the revolution to be victorious the necessary precondition is that the need for creating organs of proletarian democracy be recognized. The Socialist Party in its present state cannot, in the opinion of Carrillo, give leadership to such a mass organization. Only by "purging and uniting the Socialist and Communist Parties will it be possible to hammer out such an organization as will be able to guide the organs of proletarian democracy."

On May 11 of this year, at a meeting of the Socialist parliamentary deputies and the so-called *Compromisarios* (delegates appointed to elect the president), Largo Caballero, the leader of the Left wing of the Socialist Party, spoke and expressed himself in favor of establishing alliances to include also the Anarchist National Confederation of Labor.

The reactionary section of the leaders of the Socialist Party continue as hitherto to declare themselves against workers' and peasants' alliances.

El Sosialista wrote on May 15:

> "To create alliances at the price of rejecting all that we must preserve at all costs, namely, the leading role and the discipline of the Socialist Party, means to call the masses to pass over to other organizations with flags flying."

* The article, appearing in the *Communist International* for August, was written prior to the fascist-royalist counter-revolutionary putsch.—*Ed.*

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The Congress of the Anarchist National Confederation of Labor took place at the beginning of May in Zaragoza. At this Congress the question of unity (or, as it was called on the agenda of the Congress, the question of a "Revolutionary Alliance") was one of the chief questions.

The masses of Anarchist workers, who were convinced by their own experiences during the October struggles (in Asturias, Leon, Valencia and other provinces) of the need for working class unity, insisted that the Congress should categorically express itself in favor of unity and alliances. This imperative demand of the masses was also expressed in many telegrams from the lower organizations. For instance, the Gijon organizations of Anarchists together with the local branch of the C.N.T.* sent a telegram to the Congress which read: "Fifty thousand toilers demand the creating of a revolutionary workers' alliance." The Anarchist trade union of Cardona sent a wire to the Congress, as did railroad workers of San Geronimo (Seville). Forty thousand members of the Seville Federation of the C.N.T. demanded "trade union unity and the establishment of workers' and peasants' alliances", etc. In their speeches at the Congress a number of delegates demanded unity. For instance the delegate from Barcelona, Faris Oliver, in his speech stated:

> "The heroic legions of Asturias showed us very glaringly that in the existing situation, faced by a well-organized state power, we cannot count on victory; we need the union of all."

Alvarez, a delegate from Gijon, told the Congress that during the journey of the Asturian delegation, Anarchist workers mandated the delegation to demand from the Congress that alliances be set up everywhere.

Under the influence of these demands, the Congress of the C.N.T. was forced to express its attitude towards this question. The resolution of the Gijon organization proposed that close connections be set up between the C.N.T. and U.G.T.** to struggle for the immediate improvement of the conditions of the working class, and for the "victory of the social revolution in Spain", and also that a revolutionary workers' alliance be established to unite both trade union confederations. This resolution also made provision for the possibility of political parties affiliating to the alliance. To obstruct the adoption of this proposal the leadership of the C.N.T. introduced a resolution of their own (which was adopted by the Congress) which proposed that the U.G.T. conclude a "pact of revolutionary alliance", on the condition that the latter refuses "political and

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* Anarchist Confederation of Labor.

** Union General de Trabajadores.

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parliamentary collaboration". In other words, the leaders of the C.N.T. proposed to the U.G.T. that in essence they should break with the People's Front and limit the alliances to the participation in them of only the C.N.T. and the U.G.T., excluding the political parties.

There is a special supplementary point to this decision proposed by the C.N.T. leaders which states that the proposals are only of a temporary character, and should serve as a basis for establishing contacts with the U.G.T. until the latter drafts its own counter proposals. This forced reservation is proof again of the profound urge among the masses for unity, and opens up the possibility for further negotiations.

After the Congress of the C.N.T., the *Mundo Obrero*, the central organ of the Communist Party of Spain, began a friendly polemic in its pages with the Anarchists as regards the decisions adopted by them regarding unity and the "revolutionary alliances". For instance, in the issue of May 19, the paper wrote:

> "We consider that the decisions on the alliances are positive because they express the desire of the masses for unity, and are negative because they place the question of alliances very narrowly. . . . We wish to tell our comrades of the C.N.T. that that which they call a 'revolutionary alliance' is a liaison or coordinating committee, a very good thing in itself from the point of view of united action in the struggle for economic demands. . . . Workers' and peasants' alliances are organs of the united front which guarantee united action and raise it to a much higher level."

In his article entitled "About the Workers' and Peasants' Alliances", and published in the *Mundo Obrero* of May 14, Comrade Diaz, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain, noted with satisfaction the statement made by Caballero about the workers' and peasants' alliances, and wrote:

> "From February 16 till today we have only achieved the first victories; we must go further. . . . The reactionaries are attempting to create difficulties of all kinds. They provoke conflicts, close down factories, and organize sabotage. The task of the workers' organizations in the ranks of the People's Front is with the aid of the workers' and peasants' alliances to achieve the fulfillment of the demands of the workers and peasants, and at the same time to put an end to the criminal maneuvers of reaction."

The Communist Party is the consistent supporter and organizer throughout the country of workers' and peasants' alliances, which are organs of defense of the Spanish Republic against the fascists and the counter-revolution.

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The War Threat and the World Peace Conference

By HARRISON GEORGE

EVER darker grow the war clouds. Ever nearer that moment when the peoples of the world will be hurled over the abyss. Ever closer come the bloody trenches, the cities choking under fogs of poison gas. Ever stronger the stench of dead men rotting on the battlefields. Ever blacker the future for millions of youth who will be maimed and crippled and killed by the threatening world war.

Yet, there is no people of any nation in the world that wants war. A fact that stands in contradiction to that other fact that the governments of the world are arming with ghastly swiftness for war. That the world, as much as, if not more than in August, 1914, stands wavering on the brink of war.

The American people, fully as much as any people of the world, fears and hates war. Yet none is more certain to be plunged into war wherever it may start. And none is being so pumped full of illusions of "isolation" and "neutrality".

Ask the average American. "Let 'em fight; just so we stay out of it." As though "staying out of it" depended upon our wish. Or, "Well, they won't get *me* to go!" A stupid boast, flatly contradicted by the experience of the Draft Act in 1917. A vain individual "refusing to go" when the government and the ruling capitalist class are whipping up war sentiment by every art and through every avenue of manufactured "public opinion". And the American government's policy of "neutrality" and "isolation" nurses this dangerous illusion.

After Europe was at war for two years, Woodrow Wilson was elected to "keep us out of war" because he had for those two years "kept us out of war".

There was then an American policy of "neutrality". That "neutrality" was one inescapably certain to involve America in war, because it insisted on "neutral rights" for America to supply belligerents, and it led America into war with Germany, which objected to America supplying the Allies. But, had not Morgan's bank been pro-Ally through its $3,000,000,000 loans, American "neutrality" could just as easily have led America into war with England because England objected just as much to America supplying Germany. And England's searches and seizures of American ships trying to trade with Germany were as fully an "illegal" invasion of "neutral

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rights" as was Germany's torpedo attacks upon American ships supplying England. In fact, it was because England's "illegal" stoppage of American trade with Germany was successful, that Germany in desperation put a submarine ban on American trade with the Allies.

That particular "neutrality" policy was superficially altered by the "Neutrality Act" passed by Congress on August 31, 1935, when the American government had to take an attitude toward the Italo-Ethiopian War and the sanctionist policy of the League of Nations. In one respect, as Litvinov has pointed out, this indicated the strength of the League's influence toward international cooperation against war. But aside from that, the "Neutrality Act" was a help to the Italian aggressor, an injury to the attacked Ethiopia—because it placed *both* under the same ban for arms shipments; Italy having munitions plants, Ethiopia having none. The Roosevelt neutrality policy, based on a hollow neutrality, did not penalize the violator of the Kellogg Pact.

But still more grave was the "Neutrality Act" of August 31, 1935, in its expression of an impossible "isolation" policy for America. In this respect it was a concession by the Roosevelt administration to Hearst, whose papers worked nicely on a line of saying, "Let us stay out of it" on one page while on another justifying fascist Italy's attack on Ethiopia as a "mission of civilization" against "slavery". These isolationists, nevertheless, protested sharply at any cutting off of American export of war supplies. Thus Hearst's so-called "isolation" is the same old policy that dragged America into war in 1917.

A factor too little noticed in America's favor to fascist Italy shown in the "Neutrality Act" was the big investments of Wall Street in Italy, compared to almost, if not entirely, nothing in Ethiopia. In principle, this was no different from Wilson's going into the war on the side of the Allies in 1917 because Morgan had his money on the Allies.

And tomorrow? Who can say that the estimated $2,000,000,000 of American bankers' money invested in Germany will not dictate the policy of the American government to take sides, at first, perhaps, behind a lot of fuss about "neutrality", later in active armed involvement, in support of Hitler Germany against France and the Soviet Union—when Hitler finally strikes?

Obviously, therefore, "isolation" is no assurance of peace for America. Clearly, such "neutrality" is *not* real neutrality. In fact there cannot be any such thing. *And consequently, the only way to keep America out of war is to keep war out of the world. Peace is and can only be indivisible. Security is and can only be collective.* Not even America is able to arm against a combination of powers.

That the administration itself is under no such illusions as it

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propagates among the American people is seen in the Roosevelt policy of feverish building up of armaments. Can any American worker be deluded into thinking that Congress passage of the "Neutrality Act" will "keep us out of war", when the same Congress appropriates over a billion dollars for war? A sum of $526,546,532 for the navy in one year, and $572,446,844 for the army?

Can there be any doubt, under such circumstances, knowing the far-flung interests of Wall Street in the Far East and in Latin-America, as well as in Germany and Italy, that the present "pacifist" attitude of American imperialism is dictated not at all by any principle of upholding peace, but instead is based upon a lack of preparedness for war? And has not Roosevelt drawn from Hearst the tribute of war preparation as "his one achievement"? We see, therefore, the certain danger of war if Hearst's man, Landon, is winner in November. But we also see that Roosevelt is no guarantee against war—and war on a line of policy pursued by Hearst, the helper of Hitler and Mussolini, Hearst the admirer of the Mikado and his war machine, Hearst the inciter of Japan's militarist adventurers against the Soviet Union and the Chinese people.

Logically, as a consequence of this situation, the desire for peace of the American people, their hatred of war and urge to struggle against it, can be effective only if expressed by the following actions:

1. Independent and organized mass action of all people opposed to war, against fascists and fascism in America and throughout the capitalist world, as the main inciters and organizers of war.

2. Overwhelming pressure of the people upon the American government to force it to abandon its isolation policy of so-called "neutrality", and replacing it with a policy of collective security, cooperating with the Soviet peace policy, really to keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world.

3. Organization within the United States of all elements, of whatever distinct character, who stand for peace; particularly basing such mass movement on the working class bodies such as trade unions; and allying this American movement for peace with similar organizations in other countries.

Already a basis has been laid both in America and on a world scale for organization of action by all friends of peace, all enemies of war and fascism. In America there are two centers which, while not identical in specific character, have the common aim of struggling for peace: (1) The American League Against War and Fascism; (2) The National Peace Conference.

On a world scale, the World Committee Against War and Fascism, with which the American League is connected—and the World Peace Congress now being organized to meet at Geneva in

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September, just prior to the Assembly of the League of Nations.

The World Committee Against War and Fascism, and the American League, were organized as a result of the historic Amsterdam Anti-War Congress of 1932, called together by Henri Barbusse. On a national and world scale the American League Against War and Fascism and the World Committee both stand on a program based upon action, independent action, of the toiling masses, the toilers upon whom the conduct of war depends and whose action for war or against it is materially decisive, the toilers who suffer most from war. They recognize that war and fascism spring from the same source—the inability of a profit-seeking economy to solve the problems of feeding, clothing, housing and educating the people; that war and fascism are organized by the same ultra-reactionary forces, for the same purpose, the preservation of their power and privilege. The American League enlists professional elements against war both in educational methods and for participation with workers and farmers in anti-war actions. It is a federated as well as an individual membership body. At its Third Congress at Cleveland, in January, 1936, there were delegates representing 1,840 organizations with 3,292,624 members.

The National Peace Conference is a loosely united body, disclaiming the name "organization", which is the agency of member bodies, 32 in number, besides two "consultative" and four "cooperating" organizations.

The member bodies of the National Peace Conference are extremely varied, but their very scope indicates the deep urge of the American people to fight for peace. We see among them such purely pacifist bodies as the Fellowship of Reconciliation; such organizations as the American Association of University Women, the Quakers, Unitarians, the Committee on Militarism in Education, the Y.W. C.A. and Y.M.C.A., the National Council for Prevention of War, the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, and the League of Nations Association.

The League of Nations Association, whose active spirit and president is Professor James T. Shotwell, is a most influential factor in the National Peace Conference. In view of the crisis in the League of Nations brought about by the collapse, or better said the sabotage, of sanctions against Italy, the League of Nations Association, in common with the similar body in England, the League of Nations Union, headed by Lord Robert Cecil, is revising its program.

It must be remembered that Lord Cecil, at the time the Baldwin government smashed sanctions against Italy, was among the sharpest critics of the anti-sanctionists. It is Lord Cecil who, in the name of an Initiatory Committee, has appealed for the convening, in

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Geneva, of a World Peace Congress, just before the League of Nations Assembly meets in September to consider "reorganization", "revision" or "strengthening" of the League.

The World Committee Against War and Fascism has notified Lord Cecil of its support of the World Peace Congress; and the American League, its affiliated body, is preparing a delegation, five of whom, already chosen, are as follows: Margaret Forsyth, Chairman of Delegation; Mrs. Lucille Milner, of the Civil Liberties Union; Dorothy Detzer, of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; A. A. Heller, of the Friends of the Soviet Union; and Clarence Hathaway, editor of the *Daily Worker*.

Likewise, the National Peace Conference is sending a delegation of some 29 members; and it is a fair presumption that, as the attitude of Lord Cecil and his League of Nations Union will be influential in the World Peace Congress, the American League of Nations Association will be an influential factor among the National Peace Conference delegation at Geneva.

Professor Shotwell, whose book *On the Rim of the Abyss* sets forth the revised line of the League of Nations Association, is for strengthening the League: (1) by regional pacts allowing, not only for economic and financial sanctions, but military sanctions; (2) by partial or conditional memberships that would allow for partial responsibility for military sanctions.

The World Peace Conference can, with the backing it has already been promised, therefore, play a great role in the struggle of the peoples of the world for peace, and for expressing the deep desire of the American people for peace. The appeal of the Initiatory Committee cites the "bitter crisis" in the League of Nations and appeals "to all peoples and all organizations who stand for the defense of peace to coordinate their efforts".

Naturally, the World Congress for Peace cannot be effective if it limits its activities to a general propaganda and does not direct its fire concretely against the immediate instigators of war—against German fascism and the Japanese fascist-military cliques, and against those forces and groups in each country which are directly or indirectly aiding these principal war instigators.

The World Peace Congress will be effective if it unites all friends of peace on a concrete program of struggle for peace, against war instigators, and sets up an authoritative center which can currently direct and coordinate activities of all friends of peace. A single program does not mean identical action in all countries, but it does mean that in each country the actions of the friends of peace must be directed against the concrete enemies of peace: in the United States the fight against "isolation", for collective security, and against

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fascist tendencies and organizations which incite and aid war.

Likewise, the World Peace Congress will be effective only if it does not rely upon governments and diplomats to maintain peace, but organizes public opinion for peace, maintains public vigilance, arouses indignation against aggressors, fights fascist warmongers, and causes war instigators to fear to take any step toward war.

It is absolutely imperative that the World Peace Congress do not narrow the movement for peace to its participating organizations, but rouse millions of people, and most especially aid the unity of the working class, farmers, intellectuals, and all friends of peace around the struggle for peace.

It is imperative that the World Peace Congress not only exert pressure itself on the League of Nations in behalf of strengthening the League policy of collective security, forcing it to adopt and to carry out, quite in contrast to its weakness in applying sanctions against Italy, genuinely effective measures against aggressors.

The World Peace Congress, in its appeal, considers the conditions for maintaining peace to be:

1. Inviolability of contractual obligations;
2. Reduction and limitation of armaments and prohibition of profits in arms sales;
3. Strengthening of the League of Nations so that war can be really prevented and stopped by real organization of collective security and mutual aid;
4. Creation of means, within the League of Nations, for settling international conflicts.

League policy, however, must not be allowed to replace independent action of the widest masses. Independent joint action by friends of peace in all countries is the guarantee that an aggressor will meet instant and overwhelming opposition of the peoples, and also that the League of Nations will not fail in its obligations.

The front of peace can be victorious. War can be prevented. Our task is to unite all forces, all elements, whatever their distinctive character, who will stand for peace against war and fascist war inciters. Our task is to rally the toiling masses to support effective action by the World Peace Congress. To keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world. It is possible. It must be done.

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Railroad Workers Raise Struggle Against Consolidation

By GEORGE BROWN

CONSOLIDATION of railroad facilities, expected to open up new and immediate avenues of profit to railroad investors, has for the time being been sidetracked. The dismissal wage agreement, offering temporary and partial compensation for loss of jobs, through which railroad labor executives and managements hoped to silence the opposition of the membership, failed of its purpose.

Organization of railroad lodges and committees on a terminal and state basis, forged as an instrument of self defense against mass layoffs expected to total a quarter of a million jobs, became an instrument for abolishing the office of the railroad coordinator himself. These lodge movements grew in force from the time Joseph B. Eastman, government coordinator of railroads, first made public specific plans for job economies in Kansas City, Toledo, Chicago, Birmingham, and later in eleven smaller terminals, where he proposed to issue "orders" to try out his plans. As they grew, they united to their support non-railroad unions, central and state bodies, as well as civic and farm populations in surrounding localities.

Their demand for the revision of the dismissal wage agreement, their insistence that the government stop its activities for increasing railroad unemployment, the ever-present threat of a railroad strike in a Presidential election year, brought about a pre-election truce.

Although Eastman as railroad coordinator is no more, Eastman as a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission remains. And the I.C.C. has ample authority to approve consolidations and economies.

Railroad managements, operating through the American Association of Railways, have already announced their intention to proceed with their "economy" plans as widely and quickly as possible.

Their success will depend on how quickly and widely railroad labor can spread and solidify its movement to defend jobs; how effectively it can enlist the cooperation of non-railroad labor, and of civic and farm populations in communities threatened by consolidation plans.

WHAT ARE RAILROAD CONSOLIDATIONS?

What is this move for consolidation of railroad facilities? Is it a

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step toward "progress", as railroad managements and many labor leaders wish us to believe?

Or is it part of the move of finance capital to consolidate its position at the expense of the working class—a move which, to ensure profits, seeks to degrade the workers, section by section, with the final chapter paralleling liquidation of the trade unions as free agents, as in Italy, Germany, and other fascist lands?

Both the railroad coordinator and spokesmen for bankers and railroad managements have admitted from the first that 80 per cent of savings from consolidation of facilities will come from payrolls. On the basis of eliminating a quarter of a million men from the industry (the goal of consolidations), annual savings for railroad investors would total over a quarter of a billion dollars. This is a prize well worth the investment of a year's pay "dismissal wage" or 60 per cent of wages up to five years for employees with the longest service records. Even this can be considered a concession to the potential strike pressure of the railroad unions.

In the words of George M. Harrison, President of the Railway Clerks and Chairman of the Railroad Labor Executives Association:

> "No burden will be placed upon the railroads. . . . Railway employees will get absolutely nothing from present revenues, but will receive a share of the net savings to result from future changes. . . . The plain fact is that railroad labor will receive only a fraction of the long-time savings which must result from railway unification." (Testimony before the Senate I.C.C. Committee in hearings on the Wheeler-Crosser dismissal wage bill, April, 1936.)

Consolidation of railroad facilities, of terminals, trackage and shops, would take place side by side with the organized merger of the railroads. Plans also include revolutionary plant modernization, Diesel power replacement of obsolete locomotives and other equipment, and such innovations as rail-truck service, etc.

All this follows on top of efficiency methods through which nearly a million jobs have already been scrapped in the industry. Fordization of railroad labor within each system and subsidiary, craft by craft and department by department, would accompany these new moves to treat railroad employes as common property for joint exploitation by 149 Class I railroads and more than 500 short lines and switching companies. Savings would be divided on the basis of individual stock and bond ownership.

Think what this process would mean if carried to its logical conclusion in the steel, auto, munitions, chemicals, textiles, coal, and packing industries!

At least another five million men would be added to the army of the unemployed. Towns which have grown up around shops and

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facilities which would be discarded would become mere ghost towns. Business men, professional workers, teachers would find themselves without patrons for their services or purchasers for their products.

But in the railroad industry the extent of suffering involved would be even greater. Already over 5,000 terminals have been singled out for consolidations. With the removal of shops and yards will go the tracks. Hundreds of small communities, division points of intersecting roads, terminals of roads to be rerouted for swifter cross-country service, will be literally wiped out. This is particularly true of the Middle West, where railroad men and farmers comprise the majority of the population and often the sole source of business activity.

WHY DOES THE DEMAND FOR CONSOLIDATIONS APPEAR AT THIS TIME?

It was no accident that the Emergency Transportation Act, which laid the basis for this policy, was born in the very trough of the economic crisis, in the spring of 1933.

The railroads found themselves in a position where they had quickly to stabilize their investments, watered to many times the value of some roads, on a dividend paying basis. Pooling of resources and consolidation of facilities at the expense of labor offered the only immediate solution.

The Emergency Transportation Act established a railroad coordinator with power to prevent undue impairment of earnings; avoid other wastes and preventable expense; promote financial reorganization of the carriers, so as to reduce fixed charges to the extent required by the public (read banker) interests; and improve carrier credit.

Thus, it will be seen that coordination, as proposed in the Emergency Act, was an effort to enable the roads to ride the crisis on a dividend paying basis, while actual merging of the organic structures of the roads was being sought.

Little prospect was seen at that time for any immediate carrying through of the merger proposals of the I.C.C. for a 21-railroad-system set-up (1929); for the Prince-Barriger seven-system plan (1933); or for the all-embracing one-system empire proposed that same year in the Coolidge-Baruch plan and published as the Transportation Committee Report.

Such sweeping proposals involve a complete revamping of railroad capital structure. They depend on subordination of weak to strong roads and of strong roads to the House of Morgan and other banking syndicates. Even during the most critical stages of economic collapse, pressure on still stable railroad systems was not sufficient to

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reconcile conflicting interests of blocks of investors to the point where they felt so major a step was needed.

RESISTANCE TO CONSOLIDATIONS

"If we are to continue to depend on private enterprise in the conduct of railroad transportation," said Joseph B. Eastman in his report to the 74th Congress, "profit for the private owners is a sine qua non."

But railroad labor, conscious of worker victories in France and Spain, and of the still more magnificent conquest of industry by the workers in the Soviet Union, answers: "But not at the expense of railroad jobs."

In authorizing the Union Pacific Railroad to abandon 216 miles of track in 1934, the Interstate Commerce Commission stated:

> "It is undoubtedly true that the loss of rail transportation facilities to small communities served by the branches would be a serious detriment to persons engaged in business therein, especially those having grain elevators. It is quite possible that a few small business enterprises would be practically ruined if deprived of the services of the branches. Unfortunate as this situation may be, it is obvious that the applicant cannot continue to serve these business enterprises indefinitely under such heavy deficits as shown herein."

But communities destined to suffer from such abandonment—farmers, civic bodies, even Chambers of Commerce—recall that 13,000 miles of track have been abandoned since 1921. They are alarmed by the recent threat of Ralph Budd, president of the Burlington, that another 30,000 miles of track could be eliminated with profit to the roads. They turn back to the rich land grants which launched railroad fortunes, and compare these things with their own foreclosed farms and homes, and they answer, as in the case of the proposed Minneapolis & St. Louis dismemberment: "If government money is to be poured into this road, it will be for the benefit of the communities dependent on transportation for their livelihood, and not for the benefit of Mr. Frederick Prince, millionaire stock promoter, and other absentee coupon clippers."

The rising tide of railroad labor opposition to coordination at the expense of railroad employes and communities first made itself nationally felt in January, 1935. A conference of the 1,500 General Chairmen, (spokesmen for the lodges, crafts, and systems in matters of negotiation with the managements) had been called at Chicago by railroad union heads, to consider Eastman's proposals.

The Grand Officers of the railroad brotherhoods were preparing one more link in the chain of peaceful collaboration with the railroad bankers for the benefit of the bankers.

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To the Grand Chiefs, consolidation of railroad facilities meant maintaining the roads on a paying basis, just as in 1925 the B. & O. shop speed-up plan was called progress, on the theory that profits for the employer ensure jobs and better conditions for the men.

Eastman's proposal for disarming the membership was provision for a dismissal wage for those discharged through co-ordination. Such a plan was in process of negotiation between train and engine service employes in a pending consolidation in Pittsburgh of the B. & O. and Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, and was also accepted by the railway clerks in a consolidation of offices of the Union Pacific.

But the love feast slated for January 12 between Eastman, the railroad labor executives, and the General Chairmen proved a failure. Resolutions, delegations, protests against accepting a dismissal wage as a solution were reaching the General Chairmen from back home. The membership made it clear that what it wanted was job protection and that it expected its officers to stand by it.

The result was that from their previous position of willingness to consider a dismissal wage, the Grand Officers turned to a statement that they were still "irrevocably opposed to consolidations at the expense of jobs".

Eastman, aware that the Grand Officers were not going to be able to deliver the goods, warned the leadership:

> "It has often seemed to be that while the leaders are in the front rank, they do not always lead, but are at times driven. They are able, long-headed, forceful men, but they are dealing with emotional forces which now and then get out of hand. On such occasions it may be possible to stay in front but not to lead."

Eastman's words were indeed prophetic. The General Chairmen's conference was disbanded. No expression of opinion was asked of them. No new policy on consolidations was made. The membership was given to understand that the use of economic pressure to protect railroad jobs would be invoked if necessary.

A TEST OF STRENGTH

The gravest danger to the railroad unions in the present period of capitalist decay is the threat of mass layoffs through consolidations.

The membership has sensed this danger from the first and fought it. The leadership, true to their role of class collaborators, sought to compromise the issue.

The membership contends that there is no justification for a move that will throw a quarter of a million men out of industry and will bring in its wake untold suffering and ruin to hundreds of thousands of citizens.

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They claim that they have no objection to economies which benefit all. They ask that no consolidations, mergers, or abandonments be made unless present railroad forces be maintained and the 800,000 unemployed railroad workers be put back to work. They believe that this can be done through introducing a general 6-hour day in the industry and through normal replacements to jobs vacated through death, retirement, illness, accident, etc.

When these conditions have been met, they ask that no man be dismissed from service through consolidations, unless he be given adequate compensation to maintain himself and his family until he finds re-employment on a financial scale in line with previous earnings.

They ask that the 1,500 General Chairmen be convened nationally to revise the dismissal wage agreement signed by the labor executives on May 21. They consider this agreement wholly inadequate and as having been made without proper authorization of the membership.

In the year following the collapse of the Chicago Eastman meeting, the membership watched the manuevers of the Grand Officers and came to understand that if consolidations were to be stopped they would have to be stopped at the terminals and by action of the lodges.

They were confronted with the weak position in which they were placed by division into 22 separate craft organizations. On the other hand, they were well aware of their potential economic strength through that strike power which they have allowed to be curbed by federal arbitration machinery, but which they have never surrendered.

In meeting the issue of job protection in consolidations, the members of the railroad craft unions have learned how to close ranks.

Confronted with an emergency, they brought forward the structure of federated action forged through heroic strikes as far back as 1910, and adapted it to the present struggle.

By utilizing local chairmen's associations, legislative committees, shop federations and system committees, the rank and file has found out how to unite for action while amalgamation of the craft unions is in process of building.

In properly constructing its associations on a terminal and state basis, railroad labor has found a way of winning to its support powerful allies.

The state meeting of railroad lodges in Slater, Missouri, on June 2-3, held its sessions in the High School. It was opened by a minister who asked God to give the men strength to defend their jobs and homes. It was preceded by a parade of citizens led by

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the High School band. The strongest farm organization in the state pledged cooperation, and the local Chamber of Commerce participated and donated $25.

The Missouri meeting was an outgrowth of terminal associations first organized in Kansas City and later in Slater, New Franklin, and Eldon. It concluded by setting up a state-wide association of railroad brotherhood lodges to combat coordination. Resolutions passed by the Slater meeting greatly influenced the administration to allow the office of Railroad Coordinator to expire on June 16.

Equally militant resolutions were being passed by lodges and associations of lodges in various parts of the country. In Toledo, Ohio, a loose federation of union members was welded in a local chairmen's association of all crafts through the issue of fighting consolidations.

Less well organized, but expressing the sentiment of railroad labor, farmers, and citizens against railroad banking interests, was the movement which developed in South Dakota, Minnesota, and Illinois to stop the dismemberment of the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad.

The question arose as to why the government should put up eight million dollars of taxpayers' money to dismember the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad to the detriment of the road's employees and the public. Why, when this move raised questions of collusion between John Barriger III, financial adviser of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and his former associate, Frederick Prince, did the latter make an offer personally to advance a million dollars and gain control of the system? Why should not the government lend a much smaller sum and allow the road to operate under its present ownership—the proposal of Senator Shipstead?

A Congressional investigation was demanded by Senator Elmer Benson of Minnesota. Congress adjourned before the investigation could be voted, but the promotion schemes to dismember the M. & St. L. have for the time been stopped.

The M. & St. L. campaign shows the growing consciousness of labor, farmers, and citizens in stricken communities to turn to their own representatives in Congress for assistance.

In this case farmer and labor representatives took the lead in carrying the fight to Congress.

On the question of defeating the move to extend Coordinator Eastman's office, Representative Marcantonio came to the fore. He was supported by Congressman Lundeen and other progressives. Railroad lodges had demanded that Congress instruct the Coordinator and the I.C.C. that no orders be issued or authorization given for

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consolidations at the expense of jobs in the present period of unemployment.

Railroad labor was shown that even with a small number of loyal representatives in Congress, backed by the threat of economic pressure, the bankers can be forced to retreat.

WHAT LIES AHEAD

In developing the weapon of joint action through which consolidations have so far been held back, the lesson of the danger of craft divisions and of the strength of unity is outstanding. The move for the amalgamation of the unions in the railroad industry has been strengthened. The value of associations of lodges in fighting common battles has been demonstrated.

One of the most significant developments in these federated movements is the push they are giving the union leadership.

Once these leaders were confident that with the membership silenced by the dismissal wage consolidations could go full steam ahead. Now these same officials state that the dismissal wage agreement is only a "Hindenburg Line" of last resort. Even George Harrison of the clerks, most enthusiastic promoter of the dismissal wage, now states that this agreement in no way closes the door to lodge action to prevent and resist consolidations.

As in the A. F. of L., the radicalization of the membership is forcing a split in railroad union leadership. Those leaders who wish "to stay in front", in the words of Eastman, will take up and are already taking up the demand for amalgamation; are talking strike to win a favorable Supreme Court pension decision; are initiating moves for wage increases, the six-hour day, and vacations with pay.

On a broader field they are openly identifying themselves with progressive forces fighting against Hearst and against war and fascism. They are even maneuvering for a position where they can later come out for independent political action.

The line-up of the lodges against consolidations has expressed itself in a determination to take strike action where necessary to protect jobs. Will Wall Street push railroad labor so far? Are the opposing forces of labor and capital in the railroad industry ready for a showdown?

Although the movement to stop consolidations has so far involved only a small portion of the half million organized railroad workers, indications are that it would sweep the country, once the men are given provocation. At widely different terminals, wherever actual orders were prepared, the same determination to fight came to the surface. Not all lodge action in these cases reached the stage of joint organization built in Toledo and in the state of

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Missouri. But the work of these lodges is now the property of all; and where the road has been cleared and the path mapped out, it is easy to spread terminal and state lodge associations.

That railroad labor is prepared to fight to maintain its conditions has also been shown. During the past three years strike ballots on road after road have successfully defeated attacks on wages and union conditions and attempts to use technological changes to reduce jobs (the fight for two men on Diesel cabs).

There is no doubt that the railroad interests will make tremendous concessions where strike action is threatened in key terminals, such as Kansas City and Toledo. For the first time in the history of railroad craft unions all crafts will be officially united against the rulers of the industry.

The tactic between now and the election is to spread as rapidly as possible these defensive alliances, with the understanding that the railroads are only awaiting a chance to find the men off guard, and to make sure that the offensive is taken on such issues as the 6-hour day, non-contributory pensions, and wage increases.

Railroad labor has dared to challenge capitalism's right to retrench itself at the expense of the workers. For both sides this is a life-and-death battle. On the one side it is a battle for sanctity of investments. On the other, it is a question of the very right to existence.

True to world developments in a decaying capitalist economy, the fight against the railroad barons on the issue of consolidations brings into the picture those millions of small business men, farmers and professionals who will go to the wall with the railroad workers.

It also shows the role played by the government, through its "coordinators", its loans, its use of regulatory powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission, to play the game for railroad investors.

On the Washington scene those representatives who are elected by, and responsible to, labor, can be made, as in the M. & St. L. case and coordinator bill, to separate themselves from the rest and stand as an example of what can be gained for the workers and farmers through their own political party.

Railroad labor has been pushed into the arena of world struggle. Its immediate task is to close ranks, to thrust aside those leaders who stand in the way, to unify its own forces for a victorious outcome.

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Roosevelt and the Democratic Platform

By DAVID RAMSEY

SINCE the nomination of Landon as the Republican candidate by Hearst and the Liberty League, the strategy which will be used during the campaign by the reactionaries is out in the open. With this development of Republican tactics, Roosevelt has begun to stress certain issues to meet their challenge. Hence the main outlines of the strategy which will be employed by both sides are now clearly visible.

Political events moved so quickly that in the two-week interval between the Republican and Democratic conventions developments took place which not only played a primary part in shaping the Democratic platform, but forced Roosevelt to make significant changes in his campaign plans. Until the very eve of the Philadelphia convention, Roosevelt avoided meeting controversial issues such as the Supreme Court and the Constitution. He displayed a conciliatory attitude to his opponents, since he believed that the election odds were on his side. He was afraid that if he took a stand on the Supreme Court or the Constitution this would be used by the Republicans to stampede the middle class into their camp on some fabricated issue. At the same time he made no concrete promises to labor in the belief that this vote was in the bag, and that further concessions were unnecessary. For the past six months his policy had been to try and prevent the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party, which he looked upon as a possible rival. In this he was helped by progressive labor leaders who until recently gave him a blank check of endorsement.

HEARST AND COUGHLIN USE TOWNSEND

In the fortnight before the Democratic convention developments came to a head, which injected a new factor into the political situation, and which, as we shall see, may turn out to have a decisive influence on the outcome of the election. These events had their beginning in the worst political blunder committed by Roosevelt this year. He permitted the reactionaries in both old parties to carry out a Congressional investigation of the Townsend movement. The purpose of the reactionaries was not merely to break up the drive for old age pensions as part of their general attack against labor and

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social legislation. In addition, they hoped to embitter the rank and file of the Townsend movement who in general were sympathetic to Roosevelt until the time of the investigation. Roosevelt played into the hands of the reactionaries when he permitted them to attack the Townsend movement. This had the inevitable result of making Townsend and his followers feel that the administration had attacked them. Subsequently it enabled the reactionaries to make use of Townsend in a clever maneuver against Roosevelt.

For some time the Liberty Leaguers and Hearst have been trying to harness the forces of discontent to their reactionary purposes. It is they who back most of the fascist and semi-fascist groups which are sprouting all over the country. They tried to split the ranks of the Democratic Party by using Al Smith and other Liberty League Democrats. When this failed they turned to Talmadge, the Ku-Klux Governor of Georgia. Both tricks failed, because the working people saw through Talmadge as they had seen through the outbursts of Al Smith. Then Roosevelt gave the reactionaries their long-sought-for opportunity. His passivity during the Congressional investigation of the Townsend movement made it possible for the Reverend Gerald K. Smith and Father Coughlin to work out their conspiracy to elect Landon through the Union Party. This maneuver would have been less effective if Smith and Coughlin had not been able to make use of Townsend—an opportunity which Roosevelt gave them.

Another factor which cleared the way for Townsend to become the puppet of Smith and Coughlin was the failure of the progressive labor leaders to push ahead boldly and build the Farmer-Labor Party movement. This left an opening for a straw third party to slip in and made it possible for Coughlin and Hearst to present the Union Party, and their stooge Lemke, as the heir of the traditional third-party movement in this country. Had the progressives taken advantage of the objective possibilities and built the Farmer-Labor Party in every state and community, Coughlin would not have been afforded the opportunity to come forward in the role of a third-party opposition, an "opposition" which in reality has only one purpose, the defeat of Roosevelt. Had Roosevelt not been indifferent to the cause of old-age pensions and had he put a stop to the Congressional inquisition of the Townsend movement, Coughlin and Gerald K. Smith, the creature of the Liberty League, would have been less able to take Townsend in tow and make their sinister effort to divert the Townsend movement into fascist channels.

Roosevelt has largely himself to blame for the Lemke threat to his re-election. Roosevelt's retreat before the attacks of the Liberty Leaguers did not satisfy the "forgotten" men to whom he had made

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so many promises. It made millions dissatisfied with the New Deal. By retreating Roosevelt enabled the reactionaries to make even more headway against his administration, and disillusioned even more sections of the population which had voted in 1932 for a New Deal. The followers of Coughlin and the rank and file of the Townsend movement are among the most articulate of these discontented people. They have begun to break away from the two old parties and to a lesser extent from the general capitalist scheme of things. All of them, even those who still have illusions about capitalism, want a social order in which there will be abundance for all, and in which the common people would not be exploited by the monopolists of Wall Street. Roosevelt, by failing to meet the demands of the discontented, and the progressives by failing to build the Farmer-Labor Party movement more energetically, made these millions listen to unscrupulous demagogues like Smith and Coughlin who are seeking to establish a mass basis for fascism in this country. If Roosevelt had paid more attention to the demands of the masses and if the progressives had realized the necessity of building a Farmer-Labor Party in 1936 in order to prevent the rise of a fascist "third party", then Smith and Coughlin would not have been in a position to apply the tactic of "divide and conquer", which makes their Union Party a serious threat against Roosevelt.

THE PROGRAM OF THE UNION PARTY

The platform and program of the Union Party which were cooked up by Coughlin and Hearst are definitely fascist in character. They echo the jingoistic slogans of Hearst, call for an aggressive militaristic program, and in the speeches of Coughlin openly threaten armed intervention in Mexico. The platform makes promises to the farmers and workers that "Congress shall legislate that there shall be an assurance of production at a profit for the farmer and a living annual wage for all laborers". Nothing concrete, however, is proposed. The savage attacks of Coughlin and Lemke against all progressive measures are a better indication of their real program than their platform which is verbal bait to obtain votes. The fifteen planks of the Union Party like the sixteen points of Coughlin's Union for Social Justice bear a marked resemblance to the promises contained in the original Hitler program. Like Hitler, Coughlin and Lemke make extravagant promises; but there are no specific demands for higher wages, for trade union organization, for unemployment insurance, for old-age pensions. Instead of nationalizing the banks and imposing some measure of control over the Morgans, Rockefellers, and other Wall Street bankers, Coughlin and Lemke merely call for a central bank.

Behind Coughlin is Wall Street which subsidizes and encourages his demagogy in order to head off the growing Farmer-Labor movement. The one concrete point which stands out in Coughlin's hysteri-

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cal outbursts is his constant plea for inflation. This would benefit only the speculators—including Coughlin who made large sums gambling with silver sales. The mass of the population, as in Germany and in France where inflation took place, would be pauperized.

Hearst, who has had an alliance with Coughlin for some time, welcomed the Union Party with loud hosannas. But even the conservative Republican newspapers, those who had fought against Coughlin and Lemke and their inflationary policy, could not restrain their joy at this attempt to divert votes from Roosevelt. Coughlin's slogan "Roosevelt and ruin" clearly indicates their tactics. He is out to smear Roosevelt from the "Left" while the reactionaries attack him from the Right. Between the two, it is hoped that Landon will slip in.

Above all, the reactionaries are attempting to convert the campaign into a "people's" crusade against the New Deal. Their main argument is "Americanism" versus the subversive policies of the administration. In their effort to build up the illusion of a national coalition, the reactionaries trotted out the Liberty League quintuplets —Al Smith, Bainbridge Colby, Ely, and Company. Two days before the Democratic convention opened, these mouthpieces of Hearst took their "walk". They repeated the usual argument about ending "the orgy of spending", balancing the budget, and called upon the convention to be "American rather than anything else". The success of this attack was as ineffective as the assault made by Al Smith on Roosevelt at the Liberty League dinner. These reactionaries are too openly the hired men of Wall Street. Far more dangerous is Coughlin's alliance with G. K. Smith and their manipulation of Townsend.

Roosevelt is too shrewd a politician not to realize this danger. He took steps to meet it, both in the Democratic platform, which he is credited with writing, and in his acceptance speech. The labor leaders who are supporting him were also alarmed, and they brought pressure to bear through John L. Lewis for adoption of a more progressive platform to counteract the Coughlin-Lemke move engineered by the Liberty Leaguers. The Union Party maneuver and pressure from labor were the two factors which helped shape the Democratic platform and the campaign policy of Roosevelt which he outlined in his acceptance speech. He made concessions to labor and to the progressives within his own party as a means of heading off the Lemke threat.

With Wall Street lined up almost solidly against him, Roosevelt realizes that his hope for re-election rests upon an appeal to the common people. The Democratic platform reflects the pressure of labor. It shows how much more effectively Roosevelt can be pushed

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to the Left, and can be made to give concessions to the workers and progressives by independent action and organization.

In the truest sense, the Democratic platform is a product of the crisis and depression. The 1932 Democratic platform did not yet reflect the growing polarization of class forces in this country. The 1936 document, on the other hand, despite its manifest limitations, is the product of pressure by labor against Roosevelt to take a position, which he otherwise would not have adopted, against the attacks of reaction.

THE PROGRESSIVE NOTE IN THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM

The Democratic platform strikes a progressive note never before heard at a previous convention of the two old parties. There are formal declarations of governmental responsibility for social security. Significant is the statement that "unemployment is a national problem, that it is an inescapable obligation of our government to meet it in a national way". Equally significant is the plank on civil liberties and the attack against "the menace of concealed fascism".

The most progressive tone is sounded in the labor plank which, unlike the Republican declaration for the open shop, says that the workers should be guaranteed "the right to collective bargaining and self-organization free from the interference of employers". This is an advance beyond the usual vague promise of the right to collective bargaining, a right which the worker cannot enjoy unless the power of the employer to coerce him is destroyed.

These progressive signs in the platform stand out all the more clearly when contrasted with the outright reaction demanded by the Republicans. It falls far short of what a Farmer-Labor Party would write in its platform, and it falls short of what Roosevelt might have written into the Democratic platform, if there had been a powerful independent force of labor and progressives operating on the Left, forcing him to give greater concessions.

The Democratic platform also shows the pressure of the reactionaries within the Democratic Party itself. Roosevelt faces the greatest opposition from the reactionaries within his own party, such as Senator Glass of Virginia, the Congressional spokesman of the House of Morgan, and the Byrds and Blantons, who are the organizers for the Liberty League within the Democratic Party. It is significant that although Glass and Byrd pay lip-service to Roosevelt, they refused to participate in the platform committee, and their speeches since the convention are of such a reactionary character that they are used by the Liberty Leaguers to attack the New Deal.

By contrast with the Republican platform, the Democratic document strikes a progressive note. But there are serious weaknesses

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which are tied up with Roosevelt's class position and the capitalistic character of the Democratic Party. While promising "to work for peace and take the profits out of war", the platform is silent about the billion-dollar war budget of the administration, the one aspect of the New Deal that the Liberty Leaguers and Hearst do not attack.

The plank on the Constitution avoids the real issue which is whether Congress shall submit to the usurped and dictatorial rule of the Supreme Court. An obvious compromise was made with the Southern Bourbons. The platform does not come out squarely for a Constitutional amendment to end the sabotage of the Supreme Court against labor and social legislation. Instead, it says that the administration will "continue to seek to meet these (social and economic) problems through legislation within the Constitution". Only after an unspecified period of time, if social problems cannot be effectively solved by legislation within the Constitution, will the administration seek "a clarifying amendment as will assure to the legislatures of the several states and the Congress of the United States, each within its proper jurisdiction, the power to enact proper laws", to meet the situation. This is clearly an evasion of the problem, since Congress now has authority under the Constitution to pass social and labor legislation and to curb the usurped powers of the Supreme Court. To wait or to attempt to achieve labor and social legislation without challenging the rule of the Supreme Court either by Congressional action or by a Constitutional amendment is to evade the real issue of the usurped powers of the judiciary and to open the door for further attacks against progressive measures by the reactionaries through their instrument, the Supreme Court.

There are many gaps in the Democratic platform. There is no concrete promise to help the youth. The inadequate peace program of the administration is not adjusted. And although the platform comes out for "equal rights to all and special privileges to none", there is no mention of the political and economic oppression of the Negro people. Nor is there a plank to guarantee them full social equality in every sphere of life.

Summing up, we see that the Democratic platform, in spite of its obvious shortcomings, at least makes some concessions to labor, the unemployed, and the people generally. There is no call to balance the budget by ending all relief. There is no plea for the open shop. There is no advocacy of splendid isolation in the manner of Hearst and the reactionaries who would like to line up on the side of Hitler and the war-makers.

The hand of labor was felt at the Democratic convention. Its influence was expressed most clearly in some of the planks we have discussed and in the speeches of liberals like Governor Earle of

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Pennsylvania. It is significant that this convention abolished the two-thirds rule under which the Southern Bourbons for a century had dominated the party through their virtual veto power over any proposed candidate. There were, however, concessions to the reactionaries. Among these was the proposed plan of representation in the next convention which is to be based on Democratic voting power in each state. This will increase the representation of the solid South. At the next convention, where the possibilities of a split in the Democratic Party are already apparent, the Southern Bourbons in alliance with machine politicians in Illinois, Missouri and New York, will be able to maintain their control.

ROOSEVELT AND THE "ECONOMIC ROYALISTS"

Roosevelt's acceptance speech not only outlined his plan of campaign, but clearly showed the pressure of the forces which molded the platform. Unlike his recent talks, which were "conciliatory" in tone, the acceptance speech was a fighting one, at least verbally. Roosevelt attacked the "economic royalists" who carved new dynasties of special privilege. He called upon the people to fight against the royalists of the economic order who seek to force them into "economic slavery".

Roosevelt used a clever device. He appealed to the traditions of American democracy and linked up the fight against "the princes of privilege" with the older struggle against autocracy. But it is significant that Roosevelt related all of his attacks to the past. It was in the past that big business imposed an "industrial dictatorship". As a result of the New Deal, according to Roosevelt, the tyranny of the economic royalists "is being ended".

We know, of course, that the New Deal fostered monopoly and strengthened the rule of big business. The few concessions which Roosevelt was forced to make to the workers and farmers in no way bear out his contention that the rule of Wall Street "is being ended". However, it is a sign of the times, it is indicative of the crystallization of sharper class line-ups, it shows the development of new political forces that Roosevelt, even if only in the past tense, tries to arouse the people against the "economic royalists". In part, his action was due to the realization that his re-election depends upon the backing of the workers and farmers, since the ultra-reactionary Wall Street forces are doing all in their power to defeat him. But, in part, Roosevelt's speech reflects the growing discontent within the country and the growing conviction of millions that Wall Street must be deprived of its right to loot and pillage the country as it pleases while millions starve amidst potential plenty.

We must stress the significant fact that the progressive tone

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of the Democratic platform and of Roosevelt's speech do not guarantee that labor and the farmers will get what they need if the New Deal is victorious at the polls in November. Roosevelt is making promises because the reactionaries have forced him to fight in self-defense. He is making concessions because of the pressure of labor, although until now this pressure from the progressives has been far too weak. But there are many loopholes in the Democratic platform. And we have seen in the past that Roosevelt has repeatedly compromised with the reactionaries. In the event that he is re-elected, only a Farmer-Labor Party will be able to press him to the Left to combat reaction, and prevent another "truce" with Wall Street.

That is why the Communist Party has told the workers and the progressives that they cannot rely upon Roosevelt, that they cannot depend upon him really to beat back the forces of reaction. At the Democratic convention, Governor Earle made the point that the Democratic Party is a "bulwark" against the advance of big business fascism. This is disproved by the whole past record of the administration and by the composition of the Democratic Party. Surely, Tammany Hall and the various other Democratic political machines in the big cities, surely the solid South which is the backbone of the Democratic Party, are no "barrier" against fascism. On the contrary, we find Tammany in close alliance with Hearst; and it is in the South that some of the most serious manifestations of incipient fascism have developed.

Of course, there are progressives in the Democratic Party, notably in Pennsylvania and on the West Coast where they are in the EPIC movement and similar organizations. To some extent their weight was felt at the convention, but offsetting them was the force of the reactionaries represented by people such as Vice-President Garner and other ultra-reactionaries. Within his own party, Roosevelt attempts to tack a course, a little off center, between these opposing forces, just as in the national political arena he wavers between the forces of reaction and the forces of progress. In the past he retreated constantly before the attacks of the reactionaries. Recently he has wavered a little to the Left, because of pressure from progressives. But to push him a little more to the Left, it is necessary for labor and the progressive forces to act independently of Roosevelt and to maintain a critical attitude towards his administration instead of their present uncritical one. In this way the progressives will not only be able to bring more pressure to bear on Roosevelt, but they will be really able to rally all forces for the defeat of Landon, an event which is necessary, if labor and the progressives are to advance in this country.

The Wall Street press, in evaluating the Democratic platform and Roosevelt's speech, laid emphasis on the fact that "the Lemke

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candidacy changed the strategy of the campaign". (*Business Week.*) They boasted that the Coughlin-Hearst-Lemke maneuver would draw votes from Roosevelt in a number of key states—Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Massachusetts, and to a lesser extent, New York. To save himself, Roosevelt had to abandon his intention to make "a middle-of-the-road campaign" in which he would have offered new breathing spells to the reactionaries. He had to make more concessions to labor in an effort to overcome the Lemke menace. Hence, the general tone of the platform with its studied imitation of the style of the Declaration of Independence; hence Roosevelt's comparison of his fight against "economic royalty" with the fight against the royalists of 1776; hence the labor plank with its veiled attack against company unions in an effort to consolidate the vote of organized labor behind Roosevelt.

His adoption of a policy of attack instead of conciliation helped clarify the situation and at the same time stimulated important developments. In the first place, the progressive unions began to realize that since Lemke threatened Roosevelt's re-election, they must undertake some independent action in key states like New York to defeat Landon. This resulted in Labor's Non-Partisan League setting up an independent organization in New York. While endorsing Roosevelt and Lehman, it will have a separate column of its own on the ballot, and will run labor candidates for various local and state offices. This is an event of great importance. We have here possibilities for a state Farmer-Labor Party, and the beginnings of that independent action by labor and progressives which alone can defeat Landon and the Lemke maneuver, force Roosevelt to make important concessions to the people, and build a real bulwark against fascism. The reactionaries are obviously worried over this development and are openly inciting Green and the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. to expel the C.I.O. unions and provoke a split in the labor movement. Through their labor agent, Hutcheson, the Liberty Leaguers are trying to neutralize the effect of Labor's Non-Partisan League, and throw the craft unions behind Landon.

THE STRUGGLE AT THE TOWNSEND CONVENTION

The Townsend convention was the next skirmish in the election campaign. Through G. K. Smith and Coughlin, the reactionaries tried to stampede the convention for Lemke. They were only partly successful mainly because of the opposition of those Townsendites who are Democrats, and to a slight degree because of the few progressives present at the convention who saw through the Smith-Coughlin bluff. While the convention did not go on record for Lemke, Smith and Coughlin have persuaded Townsend to campaign

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openly for the Union Party. Unless considerable pressure develops from below, Townsend will continue to be manipulated by Smith and his ally, Coughlin.

The reactionary character of the Union Party came out clearly in the speeches of Smith and Coughlin at the Townsend convention. Their speeches and that of Townsend, himself, could have been written by Liberty Leaguers. Coughlin made one of the most hysterical and violent attacks against Roosevelt in the history of American politics. Like Hearst's editorials it was but a thinly concealed invitation to physical assault against Roosevelt and the New Dealers.

Upon the final outcome of the Townsend convention, as fought out in the local clubs, much will depend. It is not clear at the time that this is written whether Coughlin, G. K. Smith and Townsend will be able to swing most of the Townsendites behind Lemke. There was strong opposition at the convention which will no doubt be intensified as the administration, which is in contact with one wing of the movement, pours money and promises into a counter-attack against Coughlin and G. K. Smith.

The reactionaries have changed their attitude to the Townsend movement as a result of the exigencies of the campaign, and the possibilities for reaction which they see can be developed by Gerald K. Smith. Until the convention they criticized and ridiculed the movement from every angle in an attempt to destroy its struggle for old-age pensions. Recently they changed their tune. In the first place they discovered that the Townsendites had much more strength than they had been given credit for; the *Wall Street Journal* estimated that there are at least 1,000,000 members in the Townsend Clubs today, not to mention other hundreds of thousands who are under their influence or in close sympathy with their program. The reactionaries saw in this movement the possibility which did not exist elsewhere of creating a mass base for fascism in this country.

They hoped to achieve a double purpose. They wanted to organize an army of Storm Troopers which G. K. Smith proposed to the Townsend convention; and in the absence of a Farmer-Labor ticket this year, they hoped to create a third party of "revolt" in which the discontented will be diverted from their fight for economic security into reactionary channels. These were the aims of the reactionaries at the Townsend convention which they tried to put through with the connivance of Coughlin and Smith.

Coughlin joined in the scheme because of the greater following of Townsend which he hopes to merge with his own organization and place under his control. Although the Coughlin-Smith attack failed to attain its main objective, there can be no doubt that they constitute a dangerous influence which may swing hundreds of thou-

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sands of Townsendites to Lemke or Landon, and after the elections create the foundation for an army of Storm Troopers which they would unleash against labor and the progressives. These dangerous tendencies were overlooked by progressive and Left-wing circles with the exception of the Communist Party. This is typified by the indifference of the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League to the Coughlin and Townsend movements, by their failure to unite with the rank and file of these movements for an independent progressive party to work for the immediate economic and political demands of the mass of the population. This indifferent attitude was carried to ridiculous extremes by Norman Thomas who turned a sympathetic convention, anxious to hear him present a progressive program, into a hostile jeering crowd by his attacks on the Townsend Plan.

REPUBLICANS "SMEAR" ROOSEVELT

The Republicans are apparently not confident of defeating Roosevelt unless they can successfully put through the Coughlin-Lemke stunt. Their main tactic is to smear Roosevelt in the hope that they will stampede middle-class people into their ranks and make those who are disillusioned with the New Deal vote for Lemke. This would result in the election of Landon, and explains the violence of the Republican attack which reached its height in Coughlin's apoplectic performance at the Townsend convention. They have begun widespread campaigns about Roosevelt's health and sanity, and a particularly heavy barrage has been laid down accusing him of the desire to become a dictator. The Liberty Leaguers have raised the slogan that as in 1776 the American people fought George III so in 1936 must they fight Franklin I.

All kinds of racial hatreds and prejudices are being fanned by the Republicans in an attempt to gain votes. The Republicans are telling the German and Italian Americans that Roosevelt is opposed to Hitler and Mussolini. Among the Germans they are carrying on extensive anti-Semitic and pro-Hitler propaganda. At the same time they appeal to the Jewish and Negro vote with the time-worn bromide that the Republican Party stands against Klu Kluxery.

In this atmosphere of hate, the Republican stress is not on an appeal for Landon, but on attacks against Roosevelt. Hamilton, the Republican campaign manager, set the tone of the campaign when in a recent speech he said: "People vote their dislikes. Constructive issues don't necessarily win in politics. It may not be sportsmanlike to work on that basis, but this is not a time to sit around and be nice."

Because Landon is such a poor speaker and lacks radio personality, the men who manipulate him have decided to build him up as the "average" American. He is being kept in the background, while the

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shock work is done by other speakers, principally his running mate, Knox. Landon's job is to smile, do little talking, since his radio voice is terrible and does not register well, and pose with his young daughter on the back porch of his home.

The attack of the reactionaries plus the pressure from labor forced Roosevelt to make certain concessions. In the present drought situation, for example, he poured in more money and acted far more energetically than in the drought of 1934, although even today the government does not really meet the critical needs of the farmers stricken by drought. But his gestures to the Left have brought about a corresponding increase in the demagogy of the Republicans. This came out clearly in the acceptance speech of Landon at Topeka. Landon used words which the Liberty League orators had up until now avoided, words such as "relief" and "labor unions". His whole speech was contorted by his desperate effort to appear progressive. A cold analysis of his words reveals that his "progressive" words are but a front behind which is the program of Hearst and the Liberty League. The tip-off was contained in his remark that "the time has come to stop this fumbling with recovery". The real meaning of this phrase is that the reactionaries think that the time has come to end the compromises and indecisive actions of Roosevelt. They want to stop "fumbling" with relief, with all the small concessions to labor and the farmers. They want an open, direct attack against the economic standards and democratic rights of the people.

Landon gave the show away in his remarks on labor, relief and foreign policy. He has never repudiated his statement that $1.08 per week is enough relief for an unemployed family. In his Topeka speech he said, "There is no future on the relief rolls". The Republicans, knowing that the masses are dissatisfied with the inadequate relief given them by the administration, hold forth the promise of jobs. But it is big business which denies jobs to the workers; it is big business which by lengthening the working week and increasing speed-up is adding to the army of unemployed; it is to the tender mercies of big business that Landon would throw the unemployed. The results of the Republican policy on relief, summarized by Landon's statement that they will not stand for "waste", is to be seen in New Jersey. There people are dying of starvation and tens of thousands are in desperate straits, because the Republicans follow Landon's "policy of economy in government expenditure".

Landon advocated in extended form the open-shop plank of the Republican Party and the open-shop declaration of the Iron and Steel Institute. He declared that the workers are to be "free from interference from any source". This policy, as has been pointed out by many progressives, would make union organization unlawful be-

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cause the courts would interpret it to be "interference". Equally significant was Landon's endorsement of the plant type of company union and his failure to make any reference to wages, working conditions, and a shorter work week.

With reference to foreign policy, Landon after making a vague gesture in the direction of "justice and human rights" called for "independence of judgment" on the part of the United States as against collective action. In other words, he paraphrased Hearst's ultra-isolation policies which under the guise of a fake neutrality would throw the United States on to the side of the war-makers throughout the world.

REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN TACTICS

As the first phase of the campaign draws to a close, we find the reactionaries carrying on two attacks. The open direct attack through the Republican Party calls for a balanced budget, and hints that Roosevelt will establish a dictatorship. To meet the more progressive tone of Roosevelt and the Democratic platform, the Republicans make vague promises that "those who need relief will get it", that the farmers will be "cushioned" against the depression, that the small man will be given an opportunity to share in the present upturn, that the worker will be able to become his own boss.

Every one of these promises is contradicted by the facts and by Republican deeds. But under cover of the greatest barrage of ballyhoo ever unloosed in this country, under cover of millions of dollars which Wall Street is using to buy the elections, Landon is being sold to the people as "the average American". He is an unusual "average" American indeed when you examine him in the flesh. He is a millionaire; he believes that a family can get along on $1.08 a week; he is Wall Street's tool in the reactionary drive to lower living standards and destroy civil liberties. But the Republicans and Hearst fake the facts and claim that they are trying to put Main Street into the White House. Despite their effective ballyhoo, the Republicans are relying heavily upon Coughlin, Lemke and G. K. Smith to defeat Roosevelt, and to organize an army of Storm Troopers for future labor troubles.

The tremendous pressure of Wall Street, the campaign to sell Landon as the average man, the Lemke-Coughlin conspiracy, have shortened the odds on Roosevelt. Since Landon's nomination there has unquestionably been a drift away from Roosevelt. Despite its obvious limitations the Gallup Poll indicated this tendency, although the actual extent of the drift away from Roosevelt may not be as marked as is shown by their figures. It seems that many of the urban middle classes and some of the farmers in the East, who have

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gotten least in the way of benefit payments from the New Deal, are being won to Landon by the Hearst demagogy about excessive taxation and boondoggling. At the end of July the election seems to be a pretty close affair. The odds on Roosevelt are down to about 6 to 5 as against 8 to 5 two months ago.

All this makes it imperative that the progressive forces in this country unite their ranks to defeat Landon and prevent the followers of Coughlin and Townsend from becoming the tail to the reactionary kite of the Liberty League. More than ever it is necessary for labor and the progressives to build a united front against reaction which must include the rank and file of the Coughlinites and Townsendites, and which would have for its main purpose the defeat of Landon and the independent organization of the working and farming people of this country.

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France Goes Forward With the People's Front

By V. J. JEROME

[*This is the second of a series of articles on the People's Front, the first of which appeared in the July issue. The opening section of the present article appeared as an independent piece in the Daily Worker, July 18, 1936.*]

I

HAVING examined the hopes and wishes of Old Guard Social-Democracy in regard to the People's Front, let us now turn to the criticism from the "Left".

It has of late become fashionable for those in the Socialist Party who are weakest in withstanding the reactionary pressure against the united front to rationalize capitulation into an attitude of being "Lefter" than the Communists. This is to be seen especially in regard to the issues underlying the organization of the people's front.

For instance, in the name of this "Lefterism", Herbert Zam, in the *Socialist Call*, declares "that collaboration on the lines of the People's Front should be shunned".* Another contributor, David P. Berenberg, after roundly berating the Communists for participating in the People's Front, rhapsodically declares: "Under the Socialist slogan, 'No Compromise, No Political Trading', we are the only revolutionary force left in the country."**

As with almost all other issues that produce ultra-Left elation in these critics of Communism, the "Left" winds come blowing from the caves of Trotskyism.

In most matters which make it difficult today for the Left trend to liberate itself ideologically from the hold of Old Guard Social-Democracy, the difficulty is traceable to Trotskyist counter-revolutionary ideology.

TROTSKYIST BRAWLERS AND ROGUES SHOUT FOR "UNITY"

Trotskyism has the brazenness to charge the people's front with being "the policy of betrayal" and the Communist International with "having turned itself inside out". To discredit the people's front, Trotskyism does not halt at calling by that name the traitor policy

* *Socialist Call*, April 11, 1936.
** *Socialist Call*, April 4, 1936.

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of German Social-Democracy in the pre-Hitler years, and then, as if to prove inconsistency on the part of the Communist Parties, at declaring that "the Communists did not participate in the people's front".

We ask those in the Socialist Party who are lending an ear to the Trotskyist libeling: What was that "people's front" which Trotsky accuses the Communists of having rejected and from which rejection it has now "turned itself inside out"? It was precisely the common front with the bourgeoisie—with the Bruenings and the Hindenburgs—which prepared the conditions for Hitler's assumption of power. What Trotsky urged was not unity for overcoming the policy which reformist Social-Democracy had long been following, but "unity" wherein Communism would have become a party to that policy. The "unity" he urged was *capitulation to the bourgeois-coalition terms the Social-Democratic leaders were then dictating.* The present genuine Leftward movement in the Socialist Parties represents the inevitable revolt against those very terms.

And this man, with the insolence that has become inseparable from his name, permits himself to state that the Communist policy "did more for Hitler's victory than the policy of Hitler himself".

Trotskyan logic brings us the unique conclusion that the Communists did more for Hitler's victory, etc., by non-participation in the policy of betrayal! Such violence to the laws of reasoning is inevitable in a brief for a cause that is vicious and counter-revolutionary, while outwardly adopting a mien of Lefter-than-thou.

It was of such advocates of "unity" as the Trotskyists that Engels once declared:

> ". . . the greatest sectarians and the biggest brawlers and rogues are at certain moments the loudest shouters for unity."

Pleas for unity sound strange from the lips of Trotsky.

For, as the movement for proletarian unification gains momentum, these prattlers of "unity" do their damnedest to penetrate the Social-Democratic ranks in the attempt to obstruct, damage, or derail the locomotive of the united front. These firebrands of "Leftness", who shout to the world that they have outgrown the Third International and must have a fourth, are crawling into the parties of the Second International.

Is it to reinforce the ranks of the Left? The lie is given to any such notion by their activities within the French Socialist Party. They, who prate so much of "unity", have, inside that party, attempted to destroy the world-inspiring united front of the French Socialist and Communist workers with such slander-slogans as "a bloc of two bureaucracies".

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Hatred of Communism, vilification of everything Soviet, and opposition to Socialist-Communist joint action—this is the dowry that Trotskyism brought to its misalliance with the Socialist Party of France.

The genuine Left trend in Social-Democracy, the movement representing the decisive break with reformism and disunity, speedily recognized in Trotskyism a camp of saboteurs. That is why the further progress of the united front in France made necessary the expulsion of the leaders of the Trotskyist bloc from the Young Socialist League and of a number of leading Trotskyists from the Socialist Party.

Let the American Socialists who have freed themselves in considerable measure from the Old Guard stranglehold take to heart the costly experiences of their French brothers with the Trotskyist "helpmate". It is time they realized that the bourgeoisie is now finding in counter-revolutionary Trotskyism a reserve force to perpetuate the traditional class-collaboration policy of the Second International —precisely because the Socialist rank and file and sections of the leadership have begun to take the road leading away from that policy.

But in the United States we have recently been treated to the spectacle of the Cannon-Muste group of many migrations deciding to take a night's lodging in the Socialist Party. Following upon the heels of the Old Guard defeat at the Socialist Party's Cleveland Convention, this latest move of the Trotskyists makes more plain the aims they are pursuing. They are capitalizing upon the hesitancies and half-measures of the Thomas leadership in order to check the beginnings of united action from developing into a broad and solid united front. It is not accidental that the polluted waters of Trotskyism penetrate those channels of the Socialist Party where resistance to Old Guard ideology is weak, practically and theoretically. How clearly this can be seen in the anti-unity position of the Young Socialist representatives at the recent convention of the American Youth Congress!

WHILE THOMAS HALTS THE TORIES MAKE STRIDES

In administering defeat to the Waldmans and the Oneals, the Socialist Party membership gave notice that it would not put up with a leadership whose main policy it was to prevent independent and united proletarian action. But has the will of the membership found adequate realization in the policy of Norman Thomas? The hour calls for bold advances. But Thomas still treads the path of the united front with the gingerly steps of the tenderfoot. While the Thomas leadership has dislodged the Old Guard from central

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control, it has not wholly freed itself from Old Guard reactionary ideas.

This is patent in regard to sensing the danger of fascism in the United States and, hence, the urgent need for building a decisive anti-fascist people's front. Norman Thomas shows much of the purblind unreadiness that characterized his German and Austrian Social-Democratic confreres in the pre-Hitler and pre-Dollfuss days. It is positively astounding to hear the leader of the Socialist Party saying in this hour when the forces of fascism have ganged up in support of the Landon candidacy:

> "The Republican Party is set not upon fascism as yet but upon trying to do something more remarkable than go back to the time of Coolidge. They want to go back to the time of William McKinley or farther—back, that is, to the time of genuine individualistic capitalism, tempered by a little modern social service. They can't do it and they can't check the disintegration of capitalism. When that fact is discovered there will be *real* danger from fascism."* (Italics ours —V. J. J.)

Can anything reveal more complete ignorance of the movements of the enemy?

For Norman Thomas fascism in the United States today is not a real danger! For the time being, at least, *it can't happen here.*

What is actually the source of Thomas' weak position? He has swallowed hook, line, and sinker the Hearst bait of Landon the "small man", of "the victory of Main Street over Wall Street". The Republican Party convention found it necessary to give to the Wall Street Brobdingnag the appearance of a Kansan Lilliput in order to win the "small people" as the social base for fascism. But this maneuver has been completely lost upon our trusting Thomas. He simply does not see through the elementary tricks of the quick-change artists. In his own way he even echoes the chatter of "progressivism" as regards the new alignment of forces in the Republican Party, at least insofar as that Party's intentions are concerned! For how else should we characterize his statement: "They want to go back to the time of genuine individualistic capitalism"? Genuine individualistic capitalism has only one meaning: the pre-monopoly, *i.e.*, the *progressive stage* of capitalism, historically speaking. The Landon forces, we are told, not only are not launching the offensive of fascism, but they are even endeavoring to recede from imperialism! This is the intention Norman Thomas beholds in the Republican Party platform and Presidential candidate, which receive their backing from the American Liberty League, Hearst, and the Houses of du Pont, Morgan, and Rockefeller.

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* *Socialist Call*, June 20, 1936.

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Quite naturally, with this almost incredible assumption, Thomas can see no urgent need for an intensive struggle on the wide range of the united front and the Farmer-Labor Party! For since, according to him, there is at present no real danger from fascism, to engage in struggle against it means to shunt energy from struggle against capitalism! Indeed, Thomas says of the Communists:

> "Their analysis of the real danger of fascism in America is incorrect. They actually weaken the struggle by dropping the positive fight against capitalism."*

Such a statement can result only from a faulty understanding of the fact that the most reactionary circles of finance capital are everywhere today organizing the fascist offensive. It can result only from an obdurate refusal to see that offensive manifesting itself *through features peculiar to the United States.* (In the United States a specific feature of this process is the cloak of "Constitutionalism" for fascism's underhand offensive.) It can result only from closing one's eyes to the full meaning of the unprecedented encroachments of the Supreme Court octopus upon every form of social and labor legislation and upon the democratic rights of the people. It can result only from ignoring the fascist purposes of the powerfully-backed Black Legions, Sentinels, Ku Kluxers, Crusaders, and other vigilante murder-gangs. Such a statement can result only from refusing to acknowledge the full implication of the Liberty League-Hearst offensive; of the ultra-reactionary Coughlin propaganda; of the wave of chauvinism, persecution of the foreign-born, terror against Negroes, and anti-Semitic incitement.

True, Norman Thomas sees each of these attacks upon the working class; but he sees them individually, not as connected forces in the fascist advance.

Well would it be for him to bear in mind Dimitroff's warning in regard to the arch-reactionaries of America:

> "Not to see the beginnings of real fascism in the United States behind the hypocritical outpourings of these circles 'in defense of democratic rights of the American citizen' is tantamount to misleading the working class in the struggle against its worst enemy."

How long will Norman Thomas continue to look upon the struggle against fascism as something apart from (and even opposed to!) the struggle against capitalism? Surely it is time to recognize that the only way to conduct "the positive fight against capitalism" today is by delivering the main blows at the fascist-minded tories. For they determine, in this period, the movement of capitalism as a whole.

To reason as Norman Thomas does today is to hold back from

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* *Socialist Call,* July 4, 1936.

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the fight against advancing fascism (substantially in the manner of German Social-Democracy), though he proclaim ever so loudly, "We are more Left than the Communists!"

Such "Leftness" of speech and Rightness of deed provide a good ideological stamping-ground for counter-revolutionary Trotskyism. Let us not forget Lenin's pithy characterization of Trotsky, which should stand the American Socialists in good stead at this hour:

> "The name of Trotsky signifies: Left phraseology and a bloc with the Right against the aims of the Left!"

The aim of the Left, the aim of all consistent opponents of Old Guardism, calls for the rejection of any blocs with Trotskyism.

Only through genuine revolutionary practice—in a proletarian united front against reactionary attacks, fascism, and war—can Socialists really proceed upon the highroads of revolutionary Marxism.

FORCES AND ISSUES OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

The Trotsky-influenced "Left" objections to the people's front center about three issues: the alliance of the classes, the role of the proletarian party, and forms of transition to the proletarian revolution. These issues, as will be evident to any student of Marx, are at bottom indivisible from one another. They will, therefore, be discussed in their interconnection.

The objections may be resolved into the following questions:

1. Does not the people's front policy commit the proletariat to a class alliance on the basis of class collaboration? (A corollary of this question is: does not the people's front policy surrender the revolutionary principle of proletarian hegemony over the petty bourgeoisie and make the interests of the non-proletarian class ally paramount?)

2. Does not the proletarian party entering the people's front of necessity lose its identity, diluting its program and weakening its tactic with petty-bourgeois half-measures and vacillations?

3. Does not the people's front policy sacrifice the ultimate goal of the proletariat for momentary concessions?

In regard to the first question, we have in the preceding sections already dealt with the attempts to make the people's front out to be a policy of the "lesser evil". It is necessary, however, to deal with certain other aspects of this argument.

Let us, at the outset, determine the class content of the alliance that constitutes the people's front. It is necessary to do this in order to clear from the path of discussion the preposterous allegations, echoed by certain "Left" Socialists after Trotsky and the Brandler-Lovestone camp of renegades from Communism, that the people's

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front is a union of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, a reproduction, that is, of the reformist coalition policy. Thus, we find a contributor to the *Socialist Call* declaring:

> "The Radical-Socialist Party is a capitalist party which fought doggedly and successfully against the inclusion of any working class demands in the program of the People's Front and will make impossible any legislation of a working class character in the present parliament. . . . The next French cabinet will be more completely tied hand and foot by the Radical-Socialists than the MacDonald government of 1928 was bound by the Liberal Party of England."*

In passing, we desire to ask: Does the very "Left" Socialist writer mean to imply that the reason Ramsay MacDonald, in government, betrayed the working class was that he could not do otherwise? Has not the Old Guard sought to whitewash this Labor lickspittle to royalty** in the same way, by making out a case for him as having been "bound by the Liberal Party"?

But perhaps our critic's pen slipped for the moment.

We turn, however, to the gist of the question.

In the first place, is the Radical-Socialist Party a capitalist party?

Let us see what the makeup of that party actually is. Is it a collection of captains of industry, big entrepreneurs, and high financiers? No, the Radical-Socialist Party, which had until the recent elections the largest representation in the Chamber,*** is the party of the petty-bourgeois masses of city and country, with petty savings in the family sock. It is the party of the *petits gens* of France.

It is more than significant that all authoritative students, conservative as well as liberal and radical, give the Radical-Socialist Party this character. It represents principally the interests of the masses of "peasants, shop-keepers, small businessmen and government employees", and "the Radical-Socialists share their constituents' distrust of the big industrial and financial interests usually described as *féodalités économiques*". (John C. de Wilde, *Foreign Policy Reports*, April 1, 1936.) The Party's policy has traditionally been to "defend everything that is small against everything that is big". (André Siegfried, *Tableau des Partis en France*, 1930.) It is the party which "proclaims itself heir to the true principles of the French Revolu-

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**Socialist Call*, May 16, 1936.

** Gus Tyler simply must excuse us for this name-calling—an incurable habit, it would seem, which he has solicitously tried to rid us of.

*** The results of the May, 1936 elections: Since 1932—Radical-Socialist seats decreased from 157 to 116; Communist seats increased from 10 to 72 (under proportional representation the number would be 94); Socialist seats increased from 349 to 381; the reactionary national front decreased from 266 to 237.

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tion. . . . It fights for enlightenment, freedom of thought, and progress". (Raoul de Sales, *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1936.)

The Radical-Socialist Party is the party of the intermediate strata of the population. As such, it is a party of heterogeneous group interests. It is, therefore, to be expected that certain of its sections will waver between monopoly capital and the Popular Front, while still others will tend to fall under the influence of the former. As the People's Front alliance manifests its benefits to the middle class masses, thus tightening their bond with the proletariat, the Rightist sections of the Radical-Socialist Party are put under great pressure from reactionary finance capital, and tend to hold back or to crystallize more and more into anti-People's Front blocs. The contradictory, dual character of the petty bourgeoisie, so trenchantly depicted by Karl Marx, does not fail to manifest itself in the present, as in all other crucial situations. Thus, it need surprise no one that a small section of the Radicals in the Chamber of Deputies has already deserted the People's Front. These Radicals, now sliding back, hoped, no doubt, to prevent the Front from assuming a militant anti-reactionary character. Its aggressive encroachments upon the monopolists have caused this near-capitalist wing of the Radical-Socialist Party to fear for the very fate of capitalism.

But, far from weakening the People's Front, this only stirs the ascendant Left majority of that party to a more vigilant defense of the Front and of Communist participation in it. In the June 27 issue of *L'Oeuvre*, Radical-Socialist organ, we read:

> "Let the Rightists rage at the sight of Communists acclaiming the tricolor flag and singing the Marseillaise. As for us, we find it more natural to see the symbols of liberty honored by the Communists—guardians of freedom—than by the fascists—hate-inspired enemies of this same freedom."

What is this but an implicit indication that the course of the People's Front, leading steadily to closer ties between the workers and considerable sections of the petty bourgeoisie, brings with it increasingly the hegemony of the proletariat and the guidance of its revolutionary party?

Secondly, what truth is there to the statement that the Radical-Socialist Party prevented the inclusion of any working class demands in the program of the People's Front?

The last congress of the Radical-Socialist Party, which met in Paris in October of the past year, was a signal advance beyond the Nantes Congress of two years before. Recognizing the growing menace of fascism and determined to struggle against Laval's reactionary Emergency Decrees, the Paris congress showed itself responsive to the appeal of the Communist Party for common action.

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Against all the intrigues of the Laval group, the congress resolved in favor of the anti-fascist People's Front, which Daladier, leader of the Radical-Socialists, proclaimed to be "The Union of the Third Estate with the Proletariat". The delegates realized that it was in the best interests of their party to make common cause with the working class against the two hundred reigning families. The common purpose of beating back and defeating the offensive of reaction is registered definitely in the *Program of Immediate Demands* made public by the People's Front in January, 1936.

The Program contains demands, both economic and political, which are common to the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, and others which are specifically petty bourgeois or proletarian in motivation. Of the former category we find under the political heading such demands as:

> General amnesty.
>
> Action against the Fascist Leagues.
>
> Repeal of the "*lois scelerates*" (the so-called "Sedition Laws"), retained upon the statute books since their enactment at the time of the anarchist violence at the end of the past century, and of the decrees restricting the freedom of the press.
>
> Equal rights of political and social organizations to the use of the radio.

Among specific working class political and economic demands we have:

> Recognition and carrying into effect of the right for everyone to belong to a trade union.
>
> Recognition of women's right to work.
>
> Creation of a state unemployment fund.
>
> Reduction of the working week without reduction in wages.
>
> Provision of work for the young by retiring elderly workers through the introduction of a system of adequate old-age pensions.
>
> Immediate adoption of a plan for useful large-scale public works, both in town and country, with the cooperation of the state, the local authorities, and the local savings banks.

To what end, we ask, are such deceptive statements made, as that of Gus Tyler, that the Program contains no working class demands? Is this the way to promote a true understanding here of the issues involved in the People's Front?

How sound is the position that has to be bolstered up by such falsifications?

As to the owlish wisdom that the Radical-Socialist Party "will make impossible any legislation of a working class character in the present parliament", need we point out that our "Left"-tongued oracle has proved the worse of prophets? On the very morrow, you might say, after its election, the government, responsive to the wave of stay-in strikes, enacted a series of laws which represented very

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considerable gains for the working class. These included some of the most pressing demands contained in the People's Front program: the 40-hour week without reduction in wages; paid vacations; the closed shop and collective agreements to be supervised by shop-stewards elected by the workers; more adequate pensions for sick and invalidated war veterans, a measure affecting largely the laboring masses, and the adoption of measures restoring pay cuts and repairing other injuries inflicted upon various sections of the people by the Doumergue-Laval decrees. The Matignon* agreement of June 7-8 between the employers' federation and the General Confederation of Labor, accepting the principal demands of the strikers for a general wage increase of from 7 to 15 per cent and for improved working conditions, was reached with the cooperation and under the insistence of the government.

On June 11, measures of a political nature were passed which were of special benefit to the toilers: amnesty to political prisoners, extension of the public school period by one year, and a modification of the pension laws for officials and judges designed to facilitate the dismissal of fascists from government positions. The following week, the Bank of France was democratized and the control of the monopoly-capital group considerably weakened. This was followed by the adoption of a bill for the nationalization of the war industries.

Small wonder that *Le Temps* stated with bitterness:

> "For the first time the conception of the class struggle has passed from the domain of revolutionary myth into the sphere of government action."

If the Gus Tylers in this country would leave the domain of "revolutionary" myth, we too could before long have the class struggle pass into the sphere of government action.

THE LEFT GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

Does this mean, however, that the masses of the Popular Front shall be asked to rely exclusively upon the government they have elected?

In the first place, it should be understood that neither the Blum government in France nor the Azana government in Spain can be considered a People's Front government in the true sense of the term, but rather a government of the Left supported by the People's Front. This distinction deserves to be well borne in mind. For a government of the People's Front to come into being, certain pre-

* So called, because it was signed at the Hotel Matignon, the Prime Minister's official residence.

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conditions must obtain, as pointed out in Dimitroff's Report to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.

These are: a considerable disorganization and paralysis of the bourgeois state apparatus; a stage of active revolt against fascism and reaction on the part of the masses, who are not yet ready, however, to undertake the decisive struggle for Soviet power; and the increase of the Left pressure within the Socialist and other parties of the People's Front to such an extent that considerable sections of the ranks demand crushing measures against the fascists and are prepared to engage in open struggle against reactionary, anti-Communist elements in their own parties.

Such a situation is visibly in process of development in France and in Spain. The rush of events is definitely hastening its maturing. Even as these words are being written, the fierce battlefronts of the Spanish toiling men, women, and youth flinging themselves against the fascist-royalist hordes, herald the speedy oncoming of the day of reckoning with the monstrous capitalist system itself.

The full meaning of these formative events can be grasped only through realizing the full, rich relationship of the People's Front movement to the present government which it supports.

It would be missing the very essence of the Left governments of France and Spain to view them as mere electoral-ministerial coalitions. The Left government, like the People's Front, has nothing in common with the old Left Cartel which dragged the French working class at the tail end of bourgeois politics, in the ruinous policy of class collaboration; or, in Spain, with the Socialist-bourgeois coalition government following the fall of the monarchy in 1931. While not yet that government which may serve as the form of transition to Soviet power in the moment of political crisis, it has come into being as a demonstration of the popular will to make the rich pay and to struggle on to victory against the fascists and warmongers.

The issue of participation in the present government is for the Communist Party basically a question of political expediency—namely, what policy will best serve the French proletariat and the People's Front as a whole in the present situation. The inclusion of Communists would undoubtedly bring against the government intensified provocations and attacks on the part of reaction in and out of France, leading to grave perils with which the People's Front has not yet developed sufficient power to cope. Communist participation in the government would undoubtedly result in increased pressure from the reactionaries upon the Radicals to have them split from the People's Front. The alignment of class forces in the People's Front is not yet so powerful as to put up an impregnable resistance to the barrage of the wreckers. Nor are the proletarian united front forces

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yet strong enough organizationally, throughout the land, as to make possible a Socialist-Communist United Front government in the eventuality of a Radical-Socialist defection.

For this reason the Communist Party, while not participating in the government, is prepared—and has so demonstrated by its actions—to give it full support to carry through all measures for the protection of the interests of the toiling population, for the defense of democratic liberties, for disarming and dissolving the fascist leagues, and for the maintenance of peace. Contrary to the charges of the enemies of the People's Front who are only too anxious for a rift between the Communists and Socialists, the decision of the Communist Party of France against participation in the Blum government is not a ruse or a shirking of responsibility, but is motivated by the desire for the fullest cooperation with the government.

The Communists do not make participation in the People's Front dependent upon collaboration in government. As Marxists-Leninists, they recognize that the force of the People's Front can come basically from the extra-parliamentary organized actions of the masses who give the government their support. To be free to stimulate and lead these popular actions and to help extend them to higher political levels—to the struggle for Soviet power—the Communist Party must perforce refrain from participating in the present government, while according it hearty support. In fact, by being free to support and guide the popular forces for the development of the struggles for which the People's Front was built, the Communist Party will bring about a firm basis for the government and the guarantee that it will not weaken before the forces of reaction but will merit the continued support of the People's Front, sweeping on to greater achievements.

To the extent that the Socialists, through their participation in the proletarian united front, take the road of revolutionary Marxism, they must come to the same position. This is evidenced today among our Socialist comrades in Spain who, remembering bitterly the error of participation in the bourgeois coalition government under the Zamora presidency, have, like the Spanish Communists, abstained from entering the Left government which they both support. At this very moment the whole world hears how they, Socialists and Communists united, are pouring out their life-blood in the forefront of battle to defeat the onslaught of counter-revolution.

The Communist Party of France stated its standpoint in a letter, under date of May 9, to the National Convention of the Socialist Party:

> "We shall not participate in the coming government, but will support it with the double concern of cooperating in the carrying through of a policy conforming to the interests of the people and of

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assuring the ministerial stability necessary for the achievement of such a result. . . .

"Therefore, we Communists are of the opinion that the action of the coming government not only will have to be sustained in the Chamber by a parliamentary majority, but will also have to be supported by the laboring masses united in the Committees of the Popular Front."

THE STAY-IN STRIKES AND THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The correctness of the Communist position is confirmed by the development of the mass strikes immediately following the establishment of the Blum government. Clouds of confusion have been spread by hostile elements of all kinds as to the role of the Communists in the course of these strikes. On the one hand, disrupters of unity have come forward with the usual anti-Communist gag that the Bolsheviks are not to be trusted, that the strikes were "provoked by the Communists in order to embarrass Blum and the Socialists and to discredit them even before they have had time to accomplish something favorable for the workers".* On the other hand, the motley camp of renegades and pseudo-Lefts have accused the Communist Party of "putting the quietus" on the strike movement, of "playing ball with the bourgeoisie".

The nervousness of the *Jewish Daily Forward* in regard to the strike movement of the French workers coincides essentially with the trepidations of *Le Temps* and its big bourgeois prototypes everywhere. It is the fear, *not of "embarrassment to Blum", but of embarrassment to the bourgeoisie.***

The success of the People's Front (and of the government it supports) is not only not in contradiction to strikes and other mass actions; on the contrary, its very vitality, the guarantee of the realization of its program, is dependent on such demonstrative actions of the laboring people. Only such alert, disciplined working class actions will strike fear into the camp of the industrialists and bankers, and give direction and confidence in its own strength to the government supported by the People's Front. As the Left Socialist leader, Zyromski, put it:

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* The Old Guard *Jewish Daily Forward*, June 6, 1936.

** *The Forward*, with characteristic shamelessness, distorts history and presumes to set up a false parallel by adding: "The present strikes in France recall, unfortunately, too strongly similar strikes in Italy prior to Mussolini's arrival. Here, as in Italy, workers strike by occupying factories. In Italy, this led to the march of Mussolini and his Blackshirts and to the victory of fascism."

Here is not the place to discuss the occupation of the factories by the Italian workers in the autumn of 1920. Suffice it to say, had it not been for the anti-strike policy of the Italian reformist leaders, the face of Italy—and of Europe—would now have a redder glow.

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> "The direct action of the working class cannot be sent to sleep on the grounds that a Socialist government is in power. We believe, on the contrary, that under a Front Populaire government such a working class movement can only gain in strength."

The Communist Party rose on the instant in solid support of the strikers. On the 28th of May the Party issued a proclamation of greeting to the strike movement, which opened with the following declaration:

> "The Central Committee of the French Communist Party greets the workers of the metal works and of the factories of the Paris region, the miners of Marles, the agricultural workers of Seine-et-Marne, and all those who with order and discipline are struggling in defense of their bread and that of their children."

The coordination of the mass strike movement with action by the workers' representatives in the House of Deputies showed to the world bourgeoisie and its reformist servitors that the People's Front would not permit the government it supported to become another British Labor Party or Kaiser-Socialist regime.

The gains of the strikers, some of which we enumerated above, are by now known to all and need here no further elucidation. In addition—and its significance is tremendous—the influx of workers into the trade unions swelled the ranks of the united General Confederation of Labor, overnight actually, from the 900,000 members which the C.G.T. and C.G.T.U. totaled before they merged, to 3,500,000.* The coordination of the strike movement and the formulation of the general demands are a tribute to the power of trade union unity. For although the strikes were of spontaneous origin, the strikers everywhere turned to the C.G.T. for leadership. There can be no question in the mind of anyone that, had the recent unification—brought about through the indefatigable efforts of the Communist Party—not healed the split in the French trade union movement, the strike movement and its smashing victory would have been impossible.

Quite naturally, chagrined at the victory of the workers, and at the refusal of the Blum government to "come across", the employers and all reactionaries and fascists are turning their guns upon the government and are intensifying their efforts, with the assistance of the Right-Wing Radical splitters, on the one hand, and the Trotsky counter-revolutionaries, on the other, to bring about a breach in the

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* The figure given out by the C.G.T. on June 25, 1936.

The Paris correspondent of the *New York Sun*, William Bird, reports (July 21, 1936) that the membership of the C.G.T. is now approximately four million. "Two months ago," he states, "only about 15 per cent of French labor was organized. The percentage is now close to 80."

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People's Front. The small but vociferous group of the anti-unity Radical-Socialists banded around Laval have issued their slogan of disruption: "Radicals, our sole enemy is Communism. Drive it from the People's Front!" On the other side of the medal, we have the slogan of the false-Left disrupters of proletarian unity and the People's Front: "Drive the Radicals out of the People's Front!"* These "Left" mouthpieces of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism in the Socialist ranks render objective assistance to the fascists by doing their bit for the cause of working class disunity and the disintegration of the People's Front. Opposed as they are avowedly to the very existence of the People's Front (for a People's Front without middle class masses is a mockery), its every success, of necessity, arouses their resentment. The pro-labor position of the Left government which expedited the successful outcome of the strikes is particularly not to their liking, since it blasts their loudly-trumpeted prophecies that Radical-Socialist participation would not permit of any working class gains. Expecting great game, the Trotskyist demagogues attempted to scatter panic into the splendidly disciplined strikes, and to dissuade the strikers from returning to work after their demands had been granted.

To combat counsels of disaster from adventurers of all brands that have for their aim the isolation of the French workers, the Communist Party, through its leader, Maurice Thorez, declared on June 11:

> "Though it is important to lead well the struggle for better conditions, it is also important to end it at the right moment. We must even accept a compromise in order to preserve all our forces and especially in order to counteract the panic campaigns carried on by the reactionaries."

In this way the Communist Party demonstrated once again its solid unity with the People's Front. It made clear by this declaration that to advocate at this time continued occupation of the factories, after the strike demands have been won—at a stage when the French masses are not yet prepared for the decisive struggle for Soviet power —means to play at adventurism and to break the ranks of the People's Front.

Against the Trotsky-goaded "Leftists" who are for breaking with the Radicals, who look upon the petty bourgeoisie with Lassal-

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* A typical instance of this cynical "concern", from one who would sink the ship of the People's Front if he could, is the counsel of the Trotsky-inspired, very, very "Left" Herbert Zam to the Blum government that it "shake itself free of the incubus of the Radicals". (*Socialist Call*, July 18, 1936.)

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lean eyes as "one reactionary mass",* the Communist Party warns: To sunder the workers from the rural and urban middle classes is to rob both of the alliance indispensable to their common victory over reaction and their common liberation from the oppression of capitalism. To isolate the working class is to rob it of its hegemony in the class alliance and to negate its capacity of historic carrier of socialism. To detach the middle classes from the workers means to alienate them from the forces of revolution, thus enabling the fascists to use them as a social base; means consigning them to be "one reactionary mass" performing the role of Vendee** for the royalists of King Capital. No tactic is more welcome to the de la Rocques everywhere.

Against the irresponsible stage-thunderers from the "Left", for whom the hour of revolution has already struck, the Communist Party declares: Neither the objective nor the subjective factors by which Marx and Lenin have taught us to gauge the advent of a political crisis have yet fully matured. The stage of revolution has to be promoted, not by the criminal phrasemongerings and rodomontades of the People's Front wreckers, but by day-to-day and hour-to-hour hard work on the field of class struggle, on the road of the people's advance to victory over reaction.

The Communist Party, by this position, summons the People's Front to consolidate its victories to date. Inspirer and originator of the magnificent People's Front against fascism and war, fighter for the welding of the proletariat in the united front and the unified trade unions, it comes forward at this hour, champion and leader of all the toiling people of the land, preparing them for the greater struggles to come—when occupation of the factories will mean the seizure of the factories—and power.

(*To be followed by an article on the People's Front in Spain.*)

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* It is well to remember Marx' devastating attack, in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, upon this grossly opportunist concept inspired by Ferdinand Lassalle and his followers (the "Royal Prussian Socialists"), that, in opposition to the working class, "all other classes form *only a homogeneous reactionary mass*".

** A department of Western France by that name, peopled by a backward peasantry, from which the royalists in the time of the Great French Revolution recruited forces for their counter-revolutionary insurrection.

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The Stalinist Draft of the Constitution

By M. I. KALININ

THE draft of the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. has evoked such profound interest among the broad masses of the people that not a single meeting of workers, collective farmers and toilers passes by this question.

Not only the press of our country, but the press of the entire world in one degree or another is now preoccupied with a discussion of it. There is not a single country, not a single social stratum which in one manner or another is not reacting to and expressing its opinion of the draft of our Constitution.

What causes compelled the entire world to react to the published draft of the law of the state structure of one of the countries of the world, our country? Have not enough law-giving acts of all kinds been published in the bourgeois countries? Why is it precisely to this, our law-giving act, that they react so strongly beyond the borders of the Soviet Union?

The whole bourgeois press, expressing the interests of the ruling classes and at times under the cover of the mask of neutrality and objectivity, is in substance conducting a bitter campaign against the draft of the new Constitution.

A number of the bourgeois newspapers which constantly come out against the Soviet Union say directly that this is a Bolshevist mine, a Bolshevist ruse, against their "ideal and innocent bourgeois world". Slandering, perverting the substance of the draft, but aware of the weakness of their arguments so far as their readers are concerned, this press bombards them with the concluding argument that the draft will remain on paper and that the Constitution will not be materialized.

The world is divided into two parts. One part, comprising the greatest majority of the population in capitalist countries, the workers, some of the intellectuals and the poor peasantry, expresses its deep sympathy for our Constitution, and says that it opens the widest prospects for the development of democracy. The other part, the

* From the stenographic reports of two speeches by M. I. Kalinin—at the First Yaroslavl Regional Conference of Collective Flax Farmers (June 19, 1936) and at the enlarged plenum of the Voronezh Regional Executive Committee (June 26, 1936). Published in *Pravda*, July 6, 1936. This is an abridged text of the reports.

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bourgeois-fascists, attacking the Constitution sharply, is using all its strength to slander it before the masses of the people abroad.

Substantially the most intolerable articles of the draft of the Constitution for the bourgeoisie are Articles 1 to 12 inclusive, and in particular Article 5, which says:

> "Socialist property in the U.S.S.R. has either the form of state property (property of the whole people) or the form of cooperative and collective farm (*kolkhoz*) property (property of individual collective farms and property of cooperative associations)."

In regard to this matter, the French newspaper *Le Temps* of June 15 of this year writes:

> "As of old, the regime founded by Lenin is for the benefit of one definite social class elevated to the position of a privileged class, which is incompatible with any wholesome conception of liberty, equality and democracy. And this regime begins by depriving any citizen of the right to dispose freely of what he acquires through his labor. The right of private ownership remains annihilated; the Soviet state is a Socialist state where 'Socialist ownership' assumes the form of either national property or of cooperative collective farm property. The sole exception to this general rule is made in favor of small private economy of individually working peasants and home craftsmen. For the rest, however, the law allows private ownership only in dwellings, household items, and those of everyday usage and comfort."

In most varied manner the capitalist press asserts that democracy is possible only with the preservation of private ownership of the instruments of production, *i.e.*, with the preservation of the capitalist structure, and this thought is presented to the reader always in a veiled form.

The capitalist press examines the substance of the Constitution almost with a microscope, seeking to catch in it bourgeois-democratic characteristics. Failing to find the desired things, it says that our Constitution does not protect private property, does not protect capital, and, hence, is not democratic.

The draft of our Constitution evokes hatred in the bourgeoisie because it is a brilliant reflection of those tremendous successes which the proletariat has achieved during the nineteen years of the existence of Soviet power. And it cannot be otherwise. For the basic conclusion flowing out of the fact of the creation of the new Constitution consists in this, that now, in practice, in such a tremendous country as the U.S.S.R., it is proved before the entire world that the classless society is not a chimera, not an agitational trick of the Communists, but an irrefutable and undebatable fact.

The best minds of humanity over whole centuries dreamed of the creation of a society where there would be no oppression and

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exploitation of man by man. The bourgeois scientists have spent as much time in trying to prove that such a society is impossible. The working class of the U.S.S.R. has demonstrated in practice that the socialist society is not only possible but that it has already been built, and that this society embraces one-sixth of the globe and a population of a hundred and seventy million.

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND THE RIGHTS OF THE TOILERS

What is the Constitution? It is first of all a juridical formulation of the relations between people, existing in reality. Our Constitution is no declaration, no "document of the Comintern", for conducting revolutionary agitation, as certain fascist politicians and demagogues attempt to present it. It is a juridical document confirming by law the existing social economic relations already established in our country.

If one reads Articles 118, 119, 120 and 121 of our Constitution, it becomes clear that the entire population of the Soviet Union, "social depths" as they are called in the bourgeois countries (*i.e.*, the working class, the poorest and middle peasantry), here have such rights as are enjoyed beyond the confines of the Soviet Union only by the privileged classes.

In what country besides the U.S.S.R. have annual vacations for workers and employees been established by law? Where does the working man for his common physical labor—and not for service in the police and other institutions of every description set up for the struggle against the revolutionary movement (such people the bourgeoisie makes secure in almost all the countries)—have the right to state-granted security in old age, or in the event of sickness and loss of working capacity? Nowhere in the world do the working people enjoy such rights and nowhere will they enjoy them as long as the bourgeoisie remains in power.

Here all toilers have the right to work. The socialist system of our economy guarantees work and its compensation according to the principle of socialism, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his labor". Here there can be no unemployed. The right to make use of rest resorts and sanitariums, the right to free education up to the higher education, the defense by the state of woman's interests, and the genuine and not bourgeois equality of her rights with those of men, etc., are all guaranteed by our Constitution.

The draft of our Constitution has only its name in common with the constitutions of the bourgeois countries, while fundamentally there is a tremendous distinction between them in principle. Between our Constitution and the constitution of any capitalist country, even

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of the most democratic one, there is the same fundamental difference that exists between the proletariat and bourgeoisie.

Our Constitution has all the forms, all the traits characteristic of the revolutionary class, the proletariat. Capitalist countries, however, no matter what constitutions they have, will always reflect in their forms and in their traits the capitalist structure of economy and will shield with the force of the law this economy in the interests of the ruling classes.

At the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party Comrade Stalin gave a full analysis of the political, economic, and class changes in the structure of our society, and from the process of these changes he made his conclusions regarding the advisability of introducing universal elections.

The universal elections are participated in not only by people loyal to the Soviet power. People who once fought against Soviet power, and recently were deprived of voting rights can now vote.

In a great many questions received by us from the population it is asked, "Is it actually true that according to the new Constitution the priests will enjoy voting rights; and why extend the right to vote to the kulaks? What political premises are there for this?" Such questions are quite natural. An imposing number of the active part of our population, and in particular the leading Party forces, took an ardent part in the Civil War, in the development of collectivization. That is, they struggled against those people who now have electoral rights restored to them.

The electoral system, according to the draft of the new Constitution, concerns, first of all, the peasants, who like all the other groups of the population, participate in the elections on an equal basis. According to the Constitution till now in operation, on the basis of Article 9, there is elected to the Congress of the Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics one deputy for every 25,000 voters, while in the rural communities there is elected one deputy for every 125,000 inhabitants. The Party has not been concealing the reasons for such a distinction in the representation as between the city and rural population, for it flowed out of the corresponding conditions of the situation of the time.

The peasantry conducted individual economy which encouraged emergence and nurturing of the petty small capitalists. The very method of production, the recognition of private ownership in the instruments of production—all this brought in its wake the nurturing of the petty small capitalists, who in their turn sought to become big capitalists.

Now our agricultural economy is in the main collectivized, the production of individual peasants is insignificant, and it no longer

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influences the general state plan of production of agricultural products.

The earnings of a collective farmer are closely linked to the successes of collective economy, and his cultural life has been linked to the collective economy.

From an ally of the working class in the struggle against the landowners and capitalists the peasantry has now become its brother in the socialist upbuilding.

Significant changes have taken place among the capitalist elements. A portion of them went beyond the borders of the Soviet Union, and there has taken place a natural decrease in their numbers in nineteen years, while a part of them entered the ranks of the toilers.

Our intellectuals have also changed in a very significant degree. Before, even their Leftist section was saturated with bourgeois tendencies, for the capitalist world placed its imprint on them. At the present moment the successes of socialist construction, the economic, cultural and political growth of the toilers of the entire Union, assisted in the transformation of the intellectuals into Soviet intellectuals. During the same time they received a tremendous influx from the working class and collective farm peasantry. Now it is possible to assert boldly that an overwhelming part of the intellectuals is Soviet, worker and peasant intellectual.

The working class is not the same, although through force of habit it is called the proletariat. Comrade Stalin correctly remarked at the last Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party that by the proletariat are meant those workers who work for capitalists. We have no capitalists, and therefore our worker is not a proletarian in the sense of the seller of his labor power in the "free" capitalist market.

And, lastly, during this time, our enemies were not only smashed in battle, but they were also smashed by our successes: economic, political, and cultural. For every triumph of the Soviet Union, every triumph of the growth of culture for the worker and peasant masses, every newly raised step in their political consciousness, has dealt blows to our enemies, bringing disintegration into their ranks.

The children of the disfranchised persons who grow and are brought up under Soviet conditions involuntarily become imbued with the spirit which permeates our political, economic, and social life.

And so under these conditions, can it really be said that we are making a mistake in restoring the electoral rights of our former enemies? I think not. By extending electoral rights to our opponents: priests, former kulaks, former big officials (the majority of whom are old), we give them an opportunity to participate in the

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life of the society. This is one side of the question. On the other side are opened up great opportunities of influencing them by the broad masses of the population.

There is no doubt that the restoration of the electoral rights will not increase the strength of our enemies. Of course, the sworn enemies of Soviet power will make an effort to intensify their counter-revolutionary work; but those who were forced out of the life of society, to whom this environment gave no opportunity to show themselves in action as Soviet adherents, inasmuch as they were disfranchised, will now enter the ranks of the toilers as full-fledged builders of the socialist society.

More, the universal elections will give an opportunity to isolate and expose the direct enemies of the Soviet power.

THE EXPERIENCE OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

You may observe an altogether different thing in all the constitutions of the capitalist countries. There are both deliberately beclouded language and complexity of elections. There are many words about the universality of the electoral privilege; but in reality there is an exceedingly small opportunity for its utilization by the working class and the peasantry.

The draft of the new Constitution, Article 134, says clearly:

> "Members of all Soviets of Toilers' Deputies—of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., the Supreme Councils of the Union Republics, the Soviets of Toilers' Deputies of the Territories and Regions, the Supreme Councils of the Autonomous Republics, the Soviets of Toilers' Deputies of Autonomous Regions, circuit, district, city and rural (*stanitsa*, village, hamlet, *kishlak*, *aul*); Soviets of Toilers' Deputies—are elected by the voters on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot."

The socialist universality of elections does not resemble the bourgeois. Here everybody elects on an equal basis, of which Article 135 of the Constitution speaks plainly.

Under the universal suffrage in the bourgeois-democratic countries, like France and England (these are the most democratic countries in the bourgeois world), there is required six months' residence. It is clear that with the present unemployment which in these countries embraces millions, an overwhelming number of the unemployed are deprived of this right. Besides, in France the women are deprived of the right to vote. In other words, to the category of people disfranchised for various reasons must be added more than 50 per cent of the population.

Almost everywhere the military do not participate in the elections. This non-participation is motivated by the bourgeoisie on the pretext of the alleged political neutrality of the army. However, we

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know very well that the military chiefs not only participate but, in a number of countries, set the tone in fascist organizations which under no circumstances bear a neutral political character, but, on the contrary, set as their task the struggle against Communism, the struggle against the toilers. Clearly, the electoral laws which deprive the military of the right to participate in the elections are directed entirely against the masses of soldiers, against the workers and peasants called into the army. By prohibiting participation of the soldiers in the elections the bourgeoisie seeks to stifle their political consciousness, so that in the army there may not be created a proletarian political trend.

Here the Red Army, like all the groups of the population, from top to bottom, participates in the elections.

Only our system of election of all the organs of state power, from top to bottom, gives an opportunity of genuine control and broadest pressure on them by the workers, the peasant masses, and the entire population.

The Central Committee and its inspirer, Comrade Stalin, creating such a draft of the Constitution, are certain that the masses of the people, the sturdiest mainstay of the Soviet Union, will render their mighty support and supreme loyalty to the ideals of the working class in the achievement of Communism.

There exists with us an illusion that American democracy is one of the most liberal democracies. In the feuilleton by Ilf and Petrov, published in *Pravda* for June 15, the authors tell in brilliant colors of the substance of American democracy.

It is sufficient to say that in America from two and a half to three million Negroes are disfranchised, and not in any old way, but on the basis of America's "high culture". Those are deprived of the right to vote who are illiterate. Many naive people will think what a high culture there is in America; it encourages the population to become literate in order to attain equality. But everybody understands excellently that the millionaires and those law-givers who exile the teachings of Darwin from the schools are not in the least striving to raise the culture of their people. The question is solved simply—they don't want the Negroes to participate in the elections, and it is the Negroes who are in the main illiterate.

Outwardly all this is very pretty. But substantially the most oppressed and dispossessed people are deprived of the right to vote.

It is sufficient to examine all the points of our electoral system and to compared them with any article of the constitutions of the capitalist countries and of their electoral system to see their complete contradiction.

Genuine democracy for all the people as a great sum total of

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the victories of socialism is expressed with full clarity and definiteness in the new Constitution whose creator is the great man of our epoch, Comrade Stalin.

THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

I shall dwell on two more articles—Articles 13 and 33 of the Constitution.

Article 13 reads:

> "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a federated state, formed on the basis of the voluntary association of the following Soviet Socialist Republics possessing equal right. . . ."

Wherein lies the meaning of this point? Its basic substance is first of all in that there used to be a Russian empire called "single and indivisible" by the Black Hundred patriots. Our state, however, is not only socialistic but also a Union, consisting of eleven Union republics, voluntarily united into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This fundamental difference is apparent to all; but why it is a Union state is not entirely clear to some.

In order to understand this question, it is necessary to deal in greater detail with our Party's policy in regard to nationalities. The national question has always occupied a special place in the history of our Party. From the moment of its founding the Party has been tirelessly working out the theoretical bases of national relationships of the peoples, as one of the decisive conditions for the victory of socialism in general and under the conditions prevailing in our country in particular. Those who studied or are studying the history of the Party know that the Party's authorities and theoreticians in these problems were and are Lenin and Stalin.

From 50 to 52 per cent of Russia's population were Russians, while 48, or almost half, belonged to other nationalities.

If the Russian workers and peasants bore on their shoulders the exceedingly burdensome yoke of tsarism, landlordism, and capitalism, then many times more intolerable were the oppression, coercion, and arbitrariness directed against the nationalities which populated the old tsarist Russia.

The word "Russian" was odious to a tremendous number of people. Our Party, aware of these conditions, understood that the revolution could be achieved only with the Russian working class and peasantry united with other people of the tsarist empire. In the theses of his report to the Twelfth Party Congress, Comrade Stalin formulated the fundamental meaning of our Party's national policy in its entirety. It consists of:

> "a. A decisive renunciation of each and every form of coercion in regard to nationalities;

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"b. The recognition of equality and sovereignty of the peoples in the task of shaping their destiny;

"c. The recognition of the position that a firm unification of the peoples may be accomplished only on the premises of collaboration and free will;

"d. The proclamation of the truth that the materialization of such a unification is possible only as a result of overthrowing the power of capital."

Now you will understand why we introduce into the draft of the Constitution Article 33. In it is stated that the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics consists of two chambers, the Union Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities.

Why does the Soviet consist of two chambers? For the same reason that our Soviet state consists of eleven Union republics, voluntarily uniting into a single state.

Apparently our two chambers are associated in the minds of some people with the "upper" and "lower" chambers of capitalist countries. It is therefore worthwhile saying a few words about those chambers. What are the "upper" chambers of bourgeois countries? Take the English House of Lords—according to Engels' remark, an Invalids' Home. The English House of Lords consists of persons appointed by the king, largely of the privileged and old deserving servants of the crown.

Let us take as an example the second chambers of the countries where there exists a republican form of government.

The French Senate or upper chamber is elected not by a universal ballot but by municipalities which in a majority of cases are in the hands of the bourgeoisie. It is elected not for four years, as the Chamber of Deputies, but for nine years.

Here is what Article 5 of the French Constitution of 1875 says:

"The President of the Republic may with the consent of the Senate dissolve the Chamber of Deputies before the expiration of the legal term of its prerogatives."

Thus, the French Chamber of Deputies, chosen by universal ballot, is placed under the patronage of the Senate, which has the right to send it away when it finds it advantageous to do so.

In the land of glorified democracy—the United States of America—without the consent of the Senate no bill can be sent for the President's signature. To ratify international agreements signed by the President, there is required, according to the Constitution, the consent of two-thirds of the Senate.

In all capitalist countries the second chamber is a chamber by means of which the classes leaving the stage are struggling for their existence: lords in England; princes, viscounts and counts in

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Japan; and in France simply capitalists; it is that safety valve for the ruling classes, which is intended to protect against "mutinous" steps of one kind or another on the part of the lower chambers.

Our second chamber, *i.e.*, the Soviet of Nationalities, is likewise not chosen directly by the people; it is elected by the Supreme Soviets of Union republics, ten persons from each; by the Supreme Soviets of autonomous republics, five from each, and by the Soviets of Deputies of the toilers of national regions, two persons from each.

We have many nationalities numbering only tens of thousands of population. Some of them, because of their numerical limitations, might never be represented in the Union Soviet where one deputy is chosen for each 300,000 of population.

Elections to the Soviet of Nationalities give an opportunity to all the peoples, including those with the smallest numbers, to participate in governing the country, to make known their specific national needs and interests.

The proletariat is showing exceptional sensitivity and attention toward the small peoples. From the very beginning of the Soviet power our Party and state have been raising the culture of the small peoples, while advancing their representatives into the highest organs of government.

This political keenness in regard to the small peoples has found a brilliant expression in the draft of the new Constitution. Only the Soviet country, where the workers and peasants are in power, guarantees full freedom to all the peoples, irrespective of the race or nationality to which they belong.

Instead of hatred and enmity toward everything Russian, which sprang up among the small peoples on the basis of tsarist slavery and oppression, there is now a growing respect, a feeling of love for the Russian people, for the Russian culture, on the part of all peoples populating our great Union. This was brought about by the Communist Party's national policy.

The new Constitution, preserving the two-chamber system of the Supreme Soviet and guaranteeing the right of each nationality to participate in the country's government and to defend its own national interests, will still more firmly cement the fraternal links of all the peoples of our country. At the present time every republic, every people, is striving to win a place of honor in our general competition in economic and cultural upbuilding. There is no doubt that if it falls to their lot to come out on the main "sports field", their national troops will successfully compete with the other detachments of the Red Army and will with just as great loyalty fight for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

(*Translated by Lucien Zacharoff.*)

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Special Party Convention Supplement

In the contributions of Comrades Weinstone, Gebert, Childs, and Williamson, published below, we are presenting the reports from the four concentration Districts—Detroit, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Cleveland—to the Ninth Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A., held in New York on June 24-28, 1936.

Advancing Against Reaction in the Center of the Motor Industry

By WILLIAM WEINSTONE

IN BEHALF of the Detroit delegation, the automobile District of our Party, I wish to express whole-hearted agreement with the line and policies of our Central Committee, so ably and so forcefully laid down in the report of Comrade Browder. The line of our Party has proved correct and its execution has extended the influence of our Party, making it a vital force in the labor movement and in the political life of the country. The growth of our Party has been due in no small measure to the splendid leadership of Comrade Browder, who has captained the ship. In behalf of our delegation, and also personally, I wish to pay tribute to the work of Comrade Browder and express our joy over the fact that our Party has given rise to two leaders, Browder and Ford who, side by side with Comrade Foster, command the respect, authority, and love, not only of our Party membership, but of all class-conscious workers, Negro and white. It testifies to the strength and vitality of our Party and foreshadows the great role which we will play in the coming battles to defeat reaction and to organize the triumph of the working class.

Our District, in the two years since the last Convention, following the line of our Central Committee, has grown and extended itself in Detroit. Working under great handicaps, we have succeeded in reassembling our forces, in consolidating the Party, in increasing its leading cadres from the native American elements, and in raising the membership to double what it was two years ago, from 800 to 1,600 members. Our leadership has actually been renewed in the past two years. Our contact with the labor movement, especially

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with the automobile unions, has improved, and we have succeeded to a certain extent in getting away from the rut of narrow, routine work, onto the highway of political life, through the movement for independent political action, through defense of civil rights, and through a series of economic battles.

However, the big task of entrenching the Party in the factories and trade unions, especially in organizing the great masses of unorganized, still remains before us. But the conditions for realizing these tasks have become immensely improved. Time does not permit me to enter into a discussion of several important activities—the women's work, and the election struggle resulting in the victory of Mary Zuk. I wish, however, to mention the fact, important for the election campaign, that the People's League, which we helped to build, carried out a correct tactic in making the Republican candidate, Levandoski, the main target, because he represents the reactionary clique. With his failure of election, there went down to defeat the Councilmen who supported him, including the Chrysler representatives in the City Council who were responsible for Red-baiting and anti-labor ordinances. Mary Zuk even spoke on the platform of the opposing candidate, while retaining an independent campaign and organization.

A few remarks on organization before tackling the two main questions, the automobile campaign and the Black Legion. The Party membership is new and does not yet know how to carry on the mass work in the neighborhood. More important than any organizational changes, important as they are, is the necessity for the District and Section leaderships to show the comrades *how* to carry on mass work; that is, the necessity for leadership by example. This applies especially to the form of mass work which is new to the Party, the trade union work in the A. F. of L., the neighborhood work in mass organizations, and the organization of meetings and demonstrations. In the industrial districts many of our Sections are semi-legal, and here, too, the leading personnel will have to take the initiative in leading the demonstrations and activities in breaking down the illegality.

Now about the auto unions.

THE ADVANCE OF THE AUTO UNIONS AND TASKS AHEAD

These unions, which rose and fell in the course of the last three years, have been in the paralyzing grasp of a reactionary clique headed by Francis J. Dillon, the appointee of William Green. Dillon fell short of nothing in carrying out the wishes of the motor companies; remained inactive in organizing the workers; engaged in selling out strikes, such as the big Chevrolet strike; organized strike-breaking in

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the Motor Products strike; flatly rejected industrial unionism; refused to unite with the independent unions; and cooperated with the police in ousting Communists from the factories and unions. Dillon, the Green-Woll-Hutcheson man in the auto industry, ran the whole gamut of treachery and trickery in order to stifle progressivism and prevent the organization of the automobile workers.

Today, however, this treacherous pilot of the auto workers has been dropped. At the South Bend convention, held at the end of April, a progressive leadership came into power, elected on the basis of a program of industrial unionism, an autonomous international, independent political action, trade union democracy, and militant class struggle. This was the first clean-cut victory of the new progressive policies in a basic industry, followed closely by the steel workers' convention, which accepted the leadership of the Committee for Industrial Organization in its organizational drive. It shows the possibility, in the present period, of ridding the unions of the reactionary leadership and destroys a conception once strong in our ranks that the workers are doomed until the revolution to carry the yoke of reactionary leadership. In getting rid of Dillon and his wrecking crew the auto workers cleared the path for the battle with the auto barons.

How was this achieved? It was the fruit of a three-year battle of the progressive forces, behind whom stood the small but aggressive Communist Party, with its forces in Ohio, South Bend, Wisconsin, and Detroit. The Communists were the first to raise the banner of industrial unionism and the establishment of an International with trade union democracy in the industry, and took practical measures to compel the Executive Council to grant an International. This was done in the face of opposition from the A. F. of L. leaders and of the skepticism and sabotage of Lovestoneites and other elements. The Communists were mainly responsible for the first defeat which Dillon suffered in the convention a year ago.

The appearance of the C.I.O. and its active participation in assisting the unions in this basic industry played no small part in the victory at South Bend. It assisted the auto workers in their fight with Green and gave practical assistance to the progressive forces and to the efforts to organize. The victory was achieved by the Communists and progressives, working energetically to maintain the unions in Cleveland, Toledo, and South Bend, in Detroit, and Milwaukee, to hold them together despite the sabotage work of Dillon. It was made possible by a correct policy of utilizing in good time the split which took place in the leadership of the appointed officers and Executive Council of the auto union, to build a progressive caucus along new lines, with representatives directly from the local unions.

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In this way the national caucus, meeting prior to the official convention at South Bend, virtually represented the entire union and sealed the victory in advance of the meeting. It was made possible by the progressive forces condemning the policy of strike-breaking and utterly discrediting the methods used by Dillon, so that at the South Bend convention he could hardly rally more than his appointed organizers and did not even put forward his name as candidate for president. It was made possible by a united front between the Socialists and the Communists which bound the progressive forces more strongly together. This united front was prepared by the joint work of the Socialist Party and Communist Party at the last A. F. of L. convention. But to achieve it in the auto unions it required the most friendly relationships, the most patient discussions, and the greatest persistence. The Socialist Party auto militants ought to draw the conclusion from this joint work and must not ignore it in the great task which remains before us of organizing the industry. And, finally, the change was the result of good and continuous teamwork on the part of the Communists in the various auto centers, not separate from, but in closest collaboration with, the progressives. These were the methods by which the victory at South Bend was obtained.

Since that convention the international union has proceeded aggressively to unite the independent unions under the banner of the A. F. of L., bringing in the Associated Automobile Workers as well as the so-called Coughlin union, and three out of four locals of the Mechanics Educational Society of America. In Detroit, all except a small group of the M.E.S.A. locals have already affiliated or signified their intentions to affiliate. The small group which has remained apart from the International is headed by Matt Smith, who is proving himself a crass reactionary, who has sunk to the pitiful role of carrying on a reactionary guerilla warfare to stop the trend of unification. While crying that the International has no charter to organize an industrial union, he has even allied himself with the machinists to prevent unification with the tool and die workers.

This situation has reversed itself. The movement of the masses toward unification and toward militant action has shown up the true worth of the leaders of the auto unions. That section of the M.E.S.A. which refuses to merge forces is becoming reactionary, while those which were under reactionary leadership have now become progressive. There is no doubt that unification will be completed and the forces of the automobile workers will be brought together under one International, notwithstanding the antics and somersaulting of Matt Smith.

But the International is now confronted with a real test; the organization of the unorganized workers. That which Dillon and

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Green were unable or unwilling to do has become the historic task of the progressive forces of the International. This task of organizing the unorganized is not separate, but is intimately bound up with the new economic situation that exists in the industry. The industry is working. Production has risen to the 1929 level. While there are large numbers of unemployed—in Detroit alone some 50,000 families on relief and W.P.A. projects—the largest part of the automobile workers are employed. Four hundred and sixty five thousand workers were engaged in April in the motor vehicle and parts manufacturing plants. This is still short of the high figure of 1929, when in May of that year 513,000 workers were employed; but it is double the number of 1933. Without letting up on the unemployed work, we must adjust our Party machinery and turn the eyes of progressive workers to this fact. The leadership of economic struggles is the main task facing our District and the Party as a whole. Winning the employed workers, the great task of the Party, assumes a new importance, which the Party must emphasize, overcoming its major weakness—the high percentage of unemployed in relation to the number of employed. The organization of economic struggles becomes much easier in the period of rising production, as the organization of political struggles has become easier in the period of the depression. Today it is possible to organize the economic struggles, and it is possible to combine them with political movements.

Even during the period of unemployment, because of the rock-bottom wages of the workers, strike struggles developed. In fact, it was the strike in the auto industry at the beginning of 1933 that set off the wave of strikes in the basic industries of the country. With the pick-up in production in the last year, strikes grew in number and became more militant, as indicated by the strikes in the Chevrolet plant, Toledo, and in the sharp battle in Motor Products. Production has risen as has also the number of employees, but the exploitation of the working class has become extremely sharpened. In addition, there is a shortage of the more skilled labor, which gives the workers a greater confidence and courage in placing their demands upon the companies.

The profits of the big corporations have grown by leaps and bounds, while the wages have only slightly increased, or remained stagnant. The speed-up system has become fiercer, and the hours of labor still remain too long; in some cases they are even being lengthened. Some figures indicate the great profits of the motor corporations. In 1934, General Motors earned $94,000,000. In 1935 this was almost doubled—raised to $167,000,000, while in the first quarter of 1936 it earned $52,000,000. The Chrysler corporation, in 1934, earned $9,000,000 and in 1935 $34,000,000, a four-fold

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increase. The Briggs Corporation, that hell-hole and slave-pen of Detroit, earned $5,000,000 in 1934 and over $9,000,000 in 1935. The Packard Motor Car Company, which had a loss of $7,000,000 in 1934, earned over $3,000,000 in 1935. The average wages per week still fluctuate around $26, and the annual wage at $1,000, in an industry which boasts of the highest technique and which employs the most severe forms of exploitation and oppression, which condenses the greatest amount of labor in the shortest period of time. The organization of the unorganized must, therefore, proceed upon the basis of a program of economic demands which include the demands for the increase of wages to meet rising living costs, for lowering of hours, and the establishment of the 30-hour week, for a guaranteed minimum wage of $2,000 per year; for vacations with pay; and for full compensation for all forms of industry hazards, especially lead poisoning; and for abolition of the speed-up system.

It must be stated that the progressive forces in the International are not sufficiently aware of the necessity of emphasizing these and similar demands, and proceed to organizing the workers with the bare slogan of "Organize". The lack of an economic program has been repeatedly underscored in the meetings of progressives in the last few years. The progressives have tended to emphasize the question of organization, the establishment of their International. This is understandable. But even where an International exists and has a progressive leadership and better forms of organization, it will not succeed in organizing the workers unless it is able to show them that it understands and strives for the improvement of their material conditions. The achievement of the organization of the unorganized auto workers is not only of importance to Michigan and the auto centers, but to the entire labor movement. The automotive industry is closely bound up with the steel industry, because the former consumes 40 per cent of the steel products. The organization will be fought most savagely by the auto magnates. They have known no real union organization, particularly in the centers of the open shop, Michigan. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler will use the state machine, reinforced by their private thugs, spy agencies, and murderous gangs, to keep the workers unorganized. But the motor companies, nevertheless, fear a drive of the workers, and have already made some small concessions in the form of bonuses (Chrysler has announced a five per cent, and Packard a week's vacation with pay). But these small concessions cannot stop the movement to organize. The union decided upon the drive at its last convention and is trying to raise a fund of $200,000, but it has not yet prepared its forces for the drive. The C.I.O. has promised aid.

What is the main task in the organization of the unorganized?

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It is to crack the open shop in Michigan, which produces 75 per cent of the auto products. Michigan is the haven of the open shop, sheltered and protected by the state government. The auto industry has even moved some of its plants from other organized centers into Michigan, and has established new plants in Adrian and Grand Rapids. Hence, it will require the assistance of the auto union in other centers which are more favorably situated in order to break into the stronghold of General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. In this respect, the unification of the unions, which chiefly affects Michigan, is a favorable factor. But if the auto industry is to be organized, it will require a systematic plan and many organizers along the line of the steel workers' drive, and, above all, the energetic and aggressive work of the Michigan Party and of all progressive forces.

The joint work of Socialists and Communists is here necessary in order to halt any wavering or hesitation in the official circles of the International. But, above all, the Party, its shop nuclei, the street nuclei, the language press, the Language Bureau, all forces must be brought into action for the realization of this task. In this respect we must note weaknesses in the work of our shop nuclei and a certain slackening in their activity, simultaneously with the increased activity displayed in the work within the unions. This must now be taken firmly in hand by the Party in Michigan and the auto Districts. However, the number of Party leaders are too few in the progressive union, which means that we must recruit progressives into the Party. Thus far the work of organizing the unorganized has been conceived too narrowly as the work of the auto unions alone. But if Michigan is to be brought out of the column of open-shop centers, the assistance of the craft unions is required, as they are now the older unions and can give material assistance to the organization of the main industry of Michigan. But here we must state that we have given far too little attention to the craft unions, many of which are closely related to the auto industry. Hence, the District must take up this work of strengthening the craft unions along lines already discussed in the Trade Union Commission, re-enforcing our work everywhere. Here, too, the conditions are very favorable. What can be done? We must build local committees, District organization committees, begin agitation, and act as volunteer organizers.

A growing industry in Michigan is the steel industry. The output of steel in the Michigan area has now risen to 3,000,000 tons and employs 70,000 workers. New plants are opening up and, therefore, we must take up our work in helping the steel drive, a task by no means easy, because the main plants are located in small industrial centers, removed from the main spheres of our organization. But

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undoubtedly forces exist there—in Ecorse, Windote, and Monroe—for this work.

Our trade union forces in the auto industry have increased, as also our leading personnel. This is a guarantee that we will go into the big battle with vigor and determination, in order to achieve the task which has been left to the progressive forces, a task which requires strong men and women. I feel confident that we will prove equal to the task.

THE BLACK LEGION EXPOSED

But the drive to organize the unorganized and to establish strong unions is bound up with the fight for civil rights against the labor spy system—along with the steel industry, the most extensive in the world—and against fascism and fascist gangs. Michigan is a real feudal-dominated state. The companies have had their own way. As Spivak correctly stated in his article on the Black Legion, Michigan is a state ruled by dukes and earls. It is not at all accidental that a murderous band of night-riders known as the Black Legion has come to light in the auto centers. The Black Legion is an arm of the auto manufacturers and open-shoppers, the monstrous product of the strike-breaking corporations. It is the legitimate offspring of the Liberty League gang, in which the auto manufacturers play a leading role. What is this gang? It is an organization, the members of which are armed and who are sworn to kill and destroy Catholics, Jews, Negroes, Communists, and militant trade unionists. Listen to their blood-curdling oath! To the one who takes the oath the chaplain says:

"You have already signified a desire to cast your fortunes with us. By so doing remember that our purpose is to tear down, lay waste, despoil and kill our enemies. Mercy belongs only to sycophants and emasculated soldiers."

And the member who swears in says modestly,

"Before violating a single clause, I will pray to an avenging and to an unmerciful Devil to tear my heart out and roast it over the flames of sulphur, that my head be split open and my brain scattered over the earth, that my body be ripped open and my bowels torn out and fed to carrion birds."

What gentle souls! The oath states:

"We regard as enemies of our country all aliens, Negroes, Jews and cults and creeds believing in national equality, or owing allegiance to any foreign potentate."

The press has given the impression that this organization is a cult, that it is a small band of people organized on the basis of some blood ceremony and engaged in mere night-riding antics. No. This

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is a definite fascist formation, the members of which have arms or are pledged to obtain arms and who have been striving particularly to penetrate into the armed forces, the police, prison guards, and the militia.

The Black Legion has carried through no less than 20 murders, according to the statement of the commander of the state police, two of the victims being militant workers, one of them a Communist. It plotted the death of Maurice Sugar. It has flogged innocent men who have tried to leave the organization. It has bombed the homes of strikers, trade union halls, and workers' organizations, and has forged supposed Communist leaflets, issued anti-Negro chain letters, incited the wildest chauvinism and jingoism, and has been active as a strike-breaking organization in the Toledo Chevrolet strike. The leader of the independent union, Fred Seger, who led the attempt to break the strike, was a member of the Black Legion, which has also been active in the Motor Products strike.

This organization has had operative groups, a killer squad, an arson squad, and a forgery division, with a printing shop.

But, most sinister of all, it has sought and secured positions in city, county, and state government. It controlled the city of Pontiac, the General Motors stronghold, Lincoln Park, and sought to win Highland Park by assassinating the opposing candidates for mayor. Its members consist of high officials, including prosecuting and assistant prosecuting attorneys, chiefs of police, court clerks, and other city employees, and unquestionably there have been higher-ups who have not yet been exposed. But it has also worked in the labor unions. According to a reliable source, the head of the Associated Automobile Workers (a split-off of the A. F. of L.), Arthur Greer, president of the Hudson's split-off union, and Richard Bird, member of the Automobile Labor Board, are members of the Black Legion. This confirms the repeated declaration of the Communist Party that Greer, who expelled Communists from his union and worked with stool-pigeons, was an agent of the employers. The Legion has worked in both Democratic and Republican Parties and has been especially affiliated with the Republicans through the Wolverine Republican League, which it controlled. It has had leading officials of the American Legion.

What a fine gang! This murderous crew draped itself in the American flag and carried on its work in the name of a ranting patriotism. It has particularly attacked the Communists on the ground that they threaten the peace of the country. Now we can pass judgment on this Red-baiting brotherhood. Not we, the Communists, jeopardize the peace of the people of the country, but these Black Legionaires and their associates who stand exposed as a band of cut-

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throats, murderers of the people, disrupters of the labor movement, and vile agents of the worst exploiters of the people. Let this also stand for those patriotic organizations who have made Red-baiting and suppression of the Communists a profession.

What has been the membership of the Black Legion and how widespread has been the organization? It has been strong particularly in Michigan, in Ohio, in Indiana, in the industrial areas of Michigan and adjoining states. Its social composition has not yet been established. But it is clear that its leading strata are composed of foremen, ex-policemen, watchmen, city employees, professional stoolpigeons, and strikebreakers; revealing its close relation to its masters—the auto capitalists. Undoubtedly it has attracted backward workers, some of whom it has forced into its ranks by its terroristic methods.

What is the situation with regard to this Black Legion? Feeling secure in its work and sheltered by the authorities, it has over-reached itself and committed one murder too many. It had miscalculated the strong sentiment of the people against fascism. The exposure of the killing of a W.P.A. worker, Poole, caused a wave of indignation and repulsion among the masses of the people. Whereas the first day or two in some shops the workers were tight-mouthed, after several days they expressed their contempt for the organization by writing about the Black Legion upon the bodies of the cars and the factory walls, in language which cannot be repeated here. Notwithstanding the attempts on the part of the authorities to suppress the exposure and limit it, the sentiment of the people has compelled the exposure to go on. Up to the present time, 39 have been arrested. All city governments have been compelled to issue orders to clean out the Legionaires and have instituted investigation committees. Assistant prosecutors, chiefs of police, court clerks, and city employees have been discharged. Citizens' committees have been established in Pontiac and Lincoln Park.

How was this made possible? It was due to the fact that in Detroit and Michigan a strong fight has been carried on through the work of the Michigan Conference for Civil Rights, one of the strongest united front organizations in the country, embracing the trade union movement, the Socialists, the church, the farmers, the Communists, and other political organizations. On the day of the exposure of the Black Legion, the Civil Rights Conference caused the City Council of Detroit to hold a hearing on their petition for the removal of Police Commissioner Pickett for his violations of civil rights and for his failure to find the bombers of workers' homes. Commissioner Pickett sent out 22 volunteers and the American Legion to obtain signatures on a petition to reinstate him in office. This united front organization has repeatedly demanded that the higher-

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ups be brought to light, and insisted on their arrest. It has also helped to establish a national citizens' committee and has brought the question to Washington. Mass meetings have been held, leaflets and resolutions have been widely spread, and pressure has been exerted upon the Democratic prosecution to continue the exposure.

The exposure of the Black Legion and the indignation which it has caused among the masses indicate that among the people there is a determination to defend their civil rights. In the fight against the Black Legion it has been possible, to a certain extent, to turn the target of the attack the other way and to make, not the Communists, but the fascists the enemies of the people. It has been along this line that we have been working, to stigmatize in no uncertain terms all who practice violence against the labor movement. One can now say that those who have been engaged in Red-baiting, in causing divisions in the ranks of the people, are a band of enemies of the people. That is why, when a reactionary in the Central Trades and Labor body attempted to break the united front because the Central Trades were in the same conference as the Communists, he was unanimously voted down. But there is much work to be done yet. The authorities are attempting to play down the labor cases, for they show the connections with the corporations. The Black Legionaires and their friends are working to hush the matter up and to prevent any indictments and punishment. For that reason we must continuously pursue them until we realize the slogan, "Disarm and stamp out the Black Legionaires!" The Central Committee must assist in getting the LaFollette Committee to work on the Black Legionaires.

The question has also been brought into the trade unions, which have gone on record to expel any member who has willingly joined the Black Legion forces. This is true of the International Auto Union, and now the Central Trades has appointed a committee to clean the ranks of the Black Legionaires. This is very important, because the auto companies have already sent in their stoolpigeons to destroy the unions. They must be cleansed from the unions.

The fight against the Black Legion has been connected with the movement for independent political action, because both Democrats and Republicans have been involved.

Now, finally, the question arises: have we not been aware of the Black Legion? Yes, the Party did know that some criminal band had been at work, and demanded action. That was the demand presented to the Police Commissioner. But the exact nature of this organization was unknown to us, which indicates a lack of alertness on our part and a taking for granted that some small Ku Klux Klan was at work. True, the Black Legion has been organized from the remnants of the Klan, but it has modernized. It came into existence

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soon after the Ford hunger march, and expanded with the strikes. The motor corporations decided that they could not trust the police and militia to do the jobs and that they needed bands of strike-breakers. They decided to divide the ranks of the workers on religious and racial lines and thus prevent their organization. What could the organizations offer?

Undoubtedly many were shanghaied into belonging and forced to take the oath, given a bullet as a membership card with a promise that they would receive its mate if they failed in their pledge. Many were also promised jobs, and it is not at all strange that Dickinson, head of the private employment agencies of the state, is a leading figure in the Black Legion.

Many came in because they were Southern workers who have not been reached by class-conscious propaganda or have been deceived and disappointed by the work of the A. F. of L.

From these facts we must draw some conclusions:

While the Liberty League is the main source of fascist reaction and the spring of these foul organizations, we must be alert to these fanatics, whose number will increase. The Party must have an intelligent service to find these organizations and must carefully trail down the acts of depredation against the Party, find their sources, and expose them. In practically every state such organizations exist and patriotic bodies which in the past limited themselves to agitation are growing in acts of violence.

We must raise the greatest protest against every act and not feel that we are doomed to be crucified. Ohio must now demand that the authorities act against the Black Legion and make known the information which McCrea, the Detroit Prosecutor, is most anxious to give them. Everywhere we must demand the removal of these officials from office.

We must widen the struggle for jobs by shortening the hours of labor. We must organize the unorganized. We must increase our organization against jingoism and racial hatred, to deepen and strengthen the people's front movement, the battering ram against fascist reaction—this is the great task which this Convention will bring nearer to completion.

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Smashing Through Barriers to the Organization of the Steel Workers

By B. K. GEBERT

IN THE Pittsburgh District, the Workshop of America, where the steel and coal magnates rule, democracy versus fascism is the main issue.

Until 1932 the Republican Party controlled the political machine of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 1932 the Democratic Party ousted the Republicans in a number of important cities and towns and captured the state government. The Democratic Party has been in opposition to the Republican for a long time and has attracted to its ranks and support a number of progressive elements, above all large sections of organized labor. It has not yet succeeded in building a political machine like that of New York or Chicago. The Democratic Party, which came to power with promises to relieve the unbearable economic position of the masses, did very little to fulfill those promises. Therefore, among a large section of the masses there are discontent and disillusionment and drifts to the Left. There is also a danger that some of these masses, disillusioned in the Democratic Party, may, because of the lack of a Farmer-Labor Party, swing to the Republicans or be caught by the bait of the Coughlin-Lemke anglers in behalf of the Liberty League.

The reactionary forces are concentrated mainly around the Republican platform and candidates. Hearst speaks of Landon as a Pennsylvania gift to the nation.

In the steel towns, where superintendents and open agents of the steel trust are at the same time city officials, ordinances have been passed prohibiting gatherings of even three people in the streets, the distribution of leaflets, etc.

In the mining fields in Washington and Fayette Counties the White Crusaders, a terroristic band, offspring of the Ku Klux Klan, are carrying on a campaign against the Negro people. Together with other reactionary forces, such as leaders of the American Legion, company unions promoters, and officers of the U.S. Army, they held on May 1 a Hearst-inspired, anti-labor Americanization Parade.

In Western Pennsylvania, with the exception of Fayette County,

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the miners have succeeded in organizing a powerful union. In the captive mines of Fayette County only about 50 per cent of the miners belong to the United Mine Workers of America, while the others are in a company union, known as the "Miners' Brotherhood". The 150,000 organized miners represent a powerful labor force. This movement embraces the central labor bodies of New Kensington and Torrantum, a large number of miners, aluminum workers, and members of other unions, including craft unions and local lodges of fraternal organizations. In other parts of the District the movement for a Farmer-Labor Party is proceeding very slowly, and the Trade Union Committee for the Promotion of a Farmer-Labor Party, which was organized about two months ago, is on the whole inactive. The killing of the Guffey Coal Act by the Supreme Court showed once more the need of independent political action on the part of labor, and demonstrated that organized labor cannot depend on Roosevelt, who offers no resistance to these nine uncrowned monarchs. This veto was also a signal to the coal operators to worsen the conditions of the miners and is generally accepted as a decision wished by the U.S. Steel Corporation.

THE FASCIST MENACE AN ACTUALITY TO BE FOUGHT

The menace of fascism, a menace to civil liberties and to trade unionism, is so pronounced that, in his speech on the Black Legion in Detroit, Governor Earle, who pretends to be Left of Roosevelt, declared that it is the result of the policies of the Liberty League and is closely connected with the Black Legion and the Republican Party. The Republican Senator from Pennsylvania, James J. Davis, recently declared:

> ". . . having watched the advance of radical movements in this country for many years, it is my opinion that the fight against our civil liberties is a menacing symptom of growing fascism, often carried on under the guise of combating Communism. In the era of change which now lies before the American people, the first attack on our liberties will come from fascism."

Even when Democratic and Republican spokesmen are forced to speak of the danger of fascism, Mike Tighe, President of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (A.A.), in his report to the 61st Convention in Cannonsburg, Pa., demanded a clause in the constitution that "would prevent anyone subscribing to the Communistic doctrines, become a member, or if a member, expelling him from the organization". Despite the plea of Mike Tighe to include an anti-Communist clause in the constitution of the A.A. the Convention did not act upon his recommendation.

The Pittsburgh Central Labor Union, following an excellent

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campaign carried on by the Anti-Nazi Federation to boycott Nazi Germany, issued a stirring appeal to the people of Pittsburgh, under the slogan, "No trading with the enemy!" declaring Nazi Germany to be the greatest danger to humanity.

All this clearly indicates the growing resentment against fascism, reaction and war among the broad mass of the people in Western Pennsylvania. Mobilization of the masses of people against fascism is the central political task. In the election, the Communist Party will support Farmer-Labor Party candidates where they are nominated; elsewhere it will put up its own candidates and will attempt to win cooperation with the Socialist Party.

Today, the drive to organize 400,000 steel workers began. (In Western Pennsylvania there are 100,000 steel workers to be organized.) Behind this drive are ten powerful international unions of the A. F. of L., headed by the United Mine Workers of America. This drive, if it is successful, and successful it must be, must embrace the whole labor movement and everyone who stands for the freedom of the masses. For the organization of the steel industry means not only building the trade unions and improving the economic conditions of the steel workers, but also re-establishing civil liberties. The organization of the steel industry will have a tremendous effect upon the workers throughout the country. (Steel mills can be found in almost every district, not only in Pittsburgh, Gary, or Birmingham.) It will give impetus to the organizing of the workers in other industries, above all, in the metal industry. We must remember that only 4,000,000 out of 40,000,000 workers are organized in the trade unions. In the organizational drive a very strategic role will be played by the railroad workers, and from the very beginning the railroad unions must be drawn into cooperative action with the miners and steel workers.

THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE STEEL WORKERS

What is the position of the steel workers today? According to figures compiled by the magazine *Fortune*, for May of this year, the average weekly wage for the steel workers in 1932 was about $13; in plate mills, as low as $3.75. In 1935, according to the figures of the U.S. Department of Labor, the average weekly wage of the steel workers was about $22. In the Pittsburgh District 25.2 per cent of the steel workers earned under $16 per week. At the same time, the profits of the steel corporations are constantly growing. The net profit of 127 steel corporations in 1935 was $62,961,961, as compared with a net loss of $14,703,536 for 1934.

The low wages paid in the steel industry have an effect outside the steel industry. The electricians in the Chicago area, for instance,

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claim that their wage scales are being persistently undermined by the steel companies, whose rates for electricians are about 40 per cent lower; bricklayers, masons, and plasterers have listed thirty steel companies in twelve communities where the union is well organized, except in the steel mills, which pay wages 27 per cent to 73 per cent below the union scale. We must further point out that it was the steel trusts which smashed the Iron and Structural Workers Union and sent McNamara, now the oldest labor political prisoner in the United States, to the penitentiary.

Today the steel industry is a citadel of the open shop and reaction. It breeds fascism and war. Once it is organized, it will become a citadel of trade unionism, a great force against fascism and war. In the steel mills today murderous speed-up is on the increase. In certain mills working hours have been lengthened. In some instances a twelve-hour day and a seven-day week have been re-established. The domination of the steel magnates over the steel workers does not end in the mills. The steel corporations actually dominate the entire life of the steel towns. They openly control municipalities, schools, newspapers, churches—in short, in a number of steel centers we find industrial-feudal relations. These conditions are admitted even by such magazines as *Fortune*, which describes the situation in the following words:

> "It is charged with depressing wages and lengthening the hours of labor, with spying upon its workmen both inside the plants and in their homes, with debauching unions, corrupting union leaders, and, with imperturbable aplomb, grinding down its workers day and night . . . constantly menacing labor organizations. Above all, the corporation is attacked for suppressing any measure of democracy, not only in its plants but in the communities which it dominates; for denying free speech and the right of assembly to its employees; for intimidating workmen who are dissatisfied with their working conditions; for preventing, in a thousand devious ways, that free expression of political belief that is a fundamental part of the American tradition." (*Fortune*, May, 1936.)

During the hearings of the Nye Senate Committee for the investigation of munitions makers, it was revealed that the Federal Laboratory, Inc., in Pittsburgh, was selling large orders of gas bombs, revolvers, riot guns, and machine guns to the steel corporations in preparation for any possible activity to organize the steel industry. The people who are preparing for a civil war against the steel workers are the same fascist-minded people who are subsidized and led by the Liberty League, the outstanding leader of which in Western Pennsylvania, together with Mellon, is Weir, president of the National Steel Corporation, whose income for 1935 was $11,136,452.

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BREAKING THROUGH THE COMPANY UNION BONDAGE

When the N.R.A. was inaugurated the steel corporations forced company unions upon the workers to prevent the unionization of the steel industry. In 1935, 90 per cent of the steel workers participated in the election of so-called representatives of the company unions. The building of the company unions in the steel industry is no more an accident than was the wave of union-smashing launched by open-shop monopoly capital immediately following the World War. The steel trust, one of the sponsors of the fascism-promoting Liberty League, is consciously fostering the building of company unions as an instrument for canalizing into safe channels the rising mood of struggle of the workers, and, secondly, as a means of preventing them from entering genuine trade unions.

The company unions have also been looked upon by the steel trusts as a nucleus of the fascist organization among the workers to be "coordinated" in true Hitler manner, if the steel barons have their way. They are not only promoted by the steel trust, they are being financed by them. The management of the company unions is in the hands of these same agents of the bosses who devise new methods of blacklisting and spying on the workers. The U.S. Steel Corporation, for example, pays $75,000 annually to a vice-president, Arthur H Young, whose special job is the so-called handling of labor relations. Although officially the spy system was supposed to be abolished, the business goes on as usual on the 10th floor of the Carnegie Building in Pittsburgh, in the office of Charles Tuttle, chief of the U.S. Steel spy system. In an attempt to keep the workers "happy" in their bondage of company unionism, the managements have developed so-called social life, sports, and other activities. The company unions constantly agitate in their shop papers for a class-collaboration policy. All these activities have one central objective—building up loyalty to the corporations.

But despite all these attempts on the part of the steel bosses, the workers are attempting to break through and smash their bondage. Once workers are placed together, regardless for what purpose and under what conditions, they will instinctively seek to remove the cause of their grievances and will attempt to act collectively and in the interests of their class. Thus, even the company unions, which were deliberately designed to quash all struggles, are beginning to express the discontent of the masses of the steel workers. The workers in the steel mills have begun to present their demands through the company unions. These demands are generally for a forty-hour week, a 15 per cent general increase in wages, and vacation with pay. In the company union elections of June, workers in many steel mills

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in Pittsburgh, members of the A.A., among them officials of the locals, openly announced their candidacy for elections avowedly to foster the unionization of the steel industry, and, practically without exception, all candidates who stood for industrial unionism were elected as representatives to the company unions.

Among the delegates to this Convention we have company union representatives as well as officials of the A.A. lodges. For years our policy toward the company unions has been to work within, to carry on uncompromising struggles against company unionism, to win over masses of workers for genuine trade unionism, and to organize the industry. We can say that we have been quite successful in our efforts, and now, with the present drive to organize the industry, the task is to bring the company unions in a body into the industrial union of steel workers, the A.A. Our success so far proves that, despite the efforts and devices of the steel trust, a proper mass policy can defeat the aims of the bosses.

The agreement reached between the Executive Board of the A. A. and the C.I.O. is primarily the result of the 61st annual convention of the A.A., at which a group of progressive delegates fought militantly for the acceptance of the C.I.O. proposal for an immediate drive to organize all steel and iron workers into one industrial union. The resolution adopted by the convention declared specifically and unreservedly for industrial unionism and for an organizational drive, in opposition to the proposal of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., which disguised its union-strangling policy with a cloak of respectability by saying that "proper respect for the jurisdictional rights of all national and international unions will be observed in the execution of the organizing campaign".

After the convention there was an attempt on the part of the Executive Board of the A.A. to sidetrack and bury the decision of the convention. The Board began to explain that the convention had "accepted neither plan". But this immediately brought pressure from the lodges of the A.A., who sent delegations to the Executive Board and resolutions demanding immediate action. Likewise, lodges of the A.A. sent resolutions and letters to the C.I.O. proposing plans in the light of the convention decisions.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL DRIVE AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT IS LAUNCHED

The Communists played an important role in these developments. They helped to build the lodges of the A.A. They energetically fought to bring about a campaign to organize the steel industry. The struggles were crowned with success. The Steel Workers' Organizing Committee is now a reality, and the first guns in the drive

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have been fired. Last Sunday two mass meetings of the steel workers took place in the Pittsburgh district. The problem confronting us now is to see to it that the drive is properly carried to the steel workers. We have before us the experience of the organizational drive of the great 1919 steel strike, a strike in which 365,000 steel workers participated. In tribute to the beloved chairman of our Party, Comrade William Z. Foster, under whose leadership that historic strike was conducted, we should remember that that colossal organizational drive was launched under the most difficult conditions, in the face of sabotage by Samuel Gompers and the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., and was further handicapped by craft divisions. Today, as Comrade Foster points out in his article in the *Sunday Worker* of June 21, the organizational drive begins under the most favorable objective conditions.

First of all, changes have taken place among the steel workers. There is a process of unification of the workers in the industry; with the introduction of new machinery, the number of privileged, skilled workers has declined; the predominance of foreign-born workers has declined. Today only about one-third of the steel workers are foreign-born. Of them the great majority are naturalized American citizens and speak English. The growing force of militant workers in the company unions, the progressive forces within the A.A.—all this gives additional guarantees for a successful drive. The drive begins in a Presidential election year, which is also advantageous. But to make the drive really successful, it is first of all necessary to involve, not only the whole labor movement, including unions not affiliated to the C.I.O., but the whole toiling people of each and every community—steel workers, craft unions, fraternal organizations, churches, small business men, women, youth; with a special appeal to the Negro people. All sections of the population will benefit once the steel industry is organized and the trade unions are recognized.

The organization of the steel industry will make a fundamental change in the structure, character, scope, and effectiveness of the trade union movement nationally and will give impetus to organize 40,000,000 workers. It will also accelerate the next historical step of the American working class, its liberation from the influence of the parties of capitalism and will lead to building, jointly with farmers and other toilers, the mass anti-fascist Farmer-Labor Party The steel drive is beginning at a time when, in other industries of mass production, unions are being organized, as in the case of the auto, rubber, marine, radio and metal industries. This drive begins also at a time when the French working class, as a result of its proletarian united front and People's Front victories, is gaining sub-

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stantial concessions from the boss class in the recent sweeping mass strike movement of the country.

The labor movement throughout the country must stop the attempts of the reactionary group in the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. to split the labor movement. Organized labor must prevent the execution of the threat issued by the Executive Council diehards to suspend the unions that constitute the Committee for Industrial Organization. It must be pointed out that successful organization of the steel industry will bring about benefits to the whole labor movement. For the low wages and open-shop conditions in the steel industry affect, not only the workers in the steel industry, but the entire labor movement.

The issue that divides the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. is the issue of industrial unionism in mass production industries, as part of the fundamental issue before the whole labor movement for the organization of the unorganized. This issue was brought sharply to the forefront of the Fifty-fifth Convention of the A. F. of L., and has been sharpened with each successful development in the mass production industries, auto, rubber, radio, etc. Now it is coming to a head in the struggle to organize the basic industry of the country—*steel!* The Communist Party fully supports the organizational policies of the C.I.O., and declares that to yield in any way to the demands of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. would be a betrayal of the best interests of the entire labor movement.

The Communist Party supports the C.I.O. in its refusal to disband. The C.I.O. has enthusiastic mass support in a number of State Federations of Labor, Central Labor Unions, and thousands of local unions throughout the country and among the masses of unorganized workers.

In the pamphlet issued by the C.I.O. it is stated:

> "Craft unions apply craft methods although they don't fit mass production industries—if the older organization would permit the newcomers to run their own affairs, success would be more possible. But this is not usually done. The International has direct control over the mass production locals, often with power to revoke charters, remove officers, and lay down policies. Strikes must usually be approved by the International officers, and such approval may be so slow in coming that the proper time passes. Or approval may not come at all."

We are fully in agreement with this characterization of the methods applied by the reactionary leaders in the craft unions.

We trust that the C.I.O. leaders will allow the above analysis to lead them to the logical conclusion that the main factor which has made it possible for this defective type of unionism to continue so long was the absence of trade union democracy in the A. F. of

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L., and that the introduction of this democracy is the necessary, indispensable condition that will guarantee genuine industrial unionism, and will spread organization of the unorganized. We hope that the leaders of the C.I.O. will therefore apply trade union democracy in the unions affiliated to the C.I.O., as they would like to see it developed in the craft unions, and will join with all the progressive forces in the labor movement to fight against the expulsion policies going on now in the marine union. The question of trade union democracy assumes special importance in the steel industry. The steel workers, after being dominated for such a long time by company unionism and open shops, wish to administrate their union democratically. There must be no policy of appointive powers, of discrimination. The industrial union of the steel workers must be democratically controlled unions, and in the organizational drive local Steel Workers' Organizing Committees should be set up, embracing central labor bodies, trade unions, fraternal and other organizations willing to join in the struggle to organize the industry.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY SOLID BEHIND THE ORGANIZATIONAL DRIVE

The Communist Party will do all within its power to fight to maintain the unity of the A. F. of L. by mobilizing all workers to defeat the splitting policies of the Executive Council, convinced that a split in the A. F. of L. will only be beneficial to the capitalists and open-shoppers of the country. The Communist Party will support and do everything in its power to promote and fight for trade union democracy in all the unions as the real guarantee of the effectiveness of the trade unions. In the organization drive of the steel industry, as I already pointed out, the whole toiling population and all sympathetic people in the mass organizations must be involved. Particularly are we interested in promoting women's auxiliaries as an indispensable weapon for the organization of the industry. We want to point out the absolute necessity of developing special attention to the Negro workers, who are most oppressed and exploited among the workers in the industry. They should be selected among the organizers; they should be elected to all the committees in the union. There must be established unity between the Negro and white workers as the guarantee for a united working class. Likewise, foreign-language organizers of the dominant nationalities, Italian, Polish, Croatian, etc., should be selected.

Into the steel industry tens of thousands of young workers have come in the recent period, many of them without any knowledge of the labor movement. A special campaign among the youth must be developed by the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee to win

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them into the industrial union and to provide special activities for the youth, including the organization of a special department dealing with youth problems.

In the course of the organizational drive in the steel industry, the Communist Party will make necessary proposals to strengthen the drive and to prepare the workers for the eventual struggle in the industry. We urge today the formulation of demands of the steel workers and their popularization. The workers must be shown the benefits of trade unionism.

We wish to repeat that cooperation of miners, steel workers and railroad workers must be established. The lack of representation from the railroad unions on the organizing committee represents a weakness which must be overcome for a successful drive and the coming strike struggles. The steel trust will not yield without struggle. The Communist Party, in supporting the organization drive in the steel industry and spreading it to other industries, particularly the metal industry, will also independently carry out its activities. It will point out to the steel workers, railroad workers, miners, and to all the workers of the country, the necessity for the Communist Party, which can give guarantees for the success of the drive and protect the interests of the working class. For Communists have no other interests apart from those of the workers. The Communist Party points out that from the economic struggle the workers must learn the lesson for the need of independent political action, the need for a Farmer-Labor Party that will cut the working class free from the political company unionism of the Republican and Democratic Parties. The Communist Party points out that the final emancipation of the working class is possible only after the abolition of the capitalist system and the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government, the glorious example of which is to be seen in the building of the socialist society in the Soviet Union.

The Communist Party fraction in the fraternal mass organizations such as the International Workers Order, the Croatian Fraternal Union, the Polish National Alliance, and all other mass organizations will work to involve these organizations in active participation in the organizational drive. We urge the national language bureaus of the Party to take up the question of assisting in the organization of the steel industry as their central task. This must be done by systematically developing leading personnel of the Party from the great reservoir of the masses.

This will be the best guarantee for a strong union in the steel industry, for extending full unionization to organize 40,000,000 workers, for the broad people's front, an all-inclusive Farmer-Labor Party, and for a mass Communist Party in the key industrial centers of America.

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Forging Unity Against Reaction in Illinois

By MORRIS CHILDS

COMRADES, in behalf of the delegation from the Chicago District I extend greetings to the Central Committee, to this Convention, and voice our hearty and loyal agreement with the report of Comrade Browder.

The Party as a whole, under the leadership of Comrade Browder and the Central Committee, reacts more than ever to issues of a national character, and to the policy of the national administration. In this way, the Party is becoming a real political force in the life of the nation. In our own District, the Party is more sensitive than heretofore to national and statewide issues, although in a manner still far from sufficient to meet the demands of the struggle.

Developments since the last Party convention have fully verified the general line of our Central Committee, the line which in our District has at all times been the guide in our work.

Through its improved work in the American Federation of Labor, the Party helped to crystallize the progressive forces for industrial unionism, for the organization of the unorganized, for trade union democracy. It extended and deepened the conceptions of the workers which are growing out of their conscious desire for class-struggle unions as against the policy of class collaboration expressed by the reactionary section of the A. F. of L. leadership. No one can say that we are merely critics of the labor movement; we are an active force for progress inside the trade unions.

In the Chicago District we now have scores of Communists occupying leading positions in numerous local unions, district councils, and central labor bodies. In the Chicago Federation of Labor we have scores of Communists who have been entrusted by their fellow workers with the duties of delegates.

That the slogan of unity is bearing fruit is proved by the resolutions unanimously adopted at last Sunday's meeting of the Chicago Federation of Labor, excerpts of which appeared in this morning's *Times*. The resolution asks the Executive Council to withdraw its "ultimatum" to the ten unions which comprise the C.I.O. and instead demands that the question be discussed at the next A. F. of L. convention, pointing out that the problem of industrial unionism "has long been a practical question within the labor movement".

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This resolution says further that the ultimatum of the A. F. of L. Executive Council "is provocative and gives the press and the enemies of labor basis for talk of a split". The resolution condemns the threats to suspend charters of unions "not only as disruptive of labor solidarity and of the process of peaceful settlement of differences within the A. F. of L., through the agencies of internal democracy, but such use of threatening terms is also repugnant to the tradition of the A. F. of L. as a federated body".

I want to remind the delegates to this convention of the statement of our Central Committee, signed by Browder and Foster, issued last March on this question, and they will readily see how the line of the Party coincides with the needs and moods of the masses and how our resolutions take on flesh and blood.

SOME DECISIVE BLOWS AT COMPANY UNIONISM

There are unmistakable signs all over the country, particularly in our District, that the steel workers are preparing for big battles against the steel trusts. In the preparations for these great battles the Communist Party plays an active role. We can report to the Convention that not only have the workers in South Chicago organized an independent union of several thousand now ready to affiliate with the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, to become a part of the forces that will lead in the big organization drive in the steel industry, but that these same forces, with the cooperation of the Party, have delivered some decisive blows against company unionism. In the elections held only ten days ago the progressive forces captured a majority of the employes' representatives in both Carnegie-Illinois Mills in South Chicago and Gary. Twenty out of the 22 progressive candidates were elected in South Chicago, out of a total of 34, while in Gary 23 of the 24 nominated by the progressives were elected.

Thus, the organs of the steel trusts, set up to deceive the workers, have become dialectically transformed into weapons of the workers, thanks to the correct line of the Party which guided the steel workers in the application of the united front on day-to-day issues in the plants. The candidates elected were chosen on a program of defense of the workers' interests. The Party line of utilizing every opportunity to wrest concessions from the company was adopted by the progressives, and now the company unions are on the path to struggle for genuine trade unionism.

I can report that a similar movement has developed in the International Harvester plant, where the independent union of nearly 4,000 is now taking the lead nationally to organize all International Harvester plants, with the company steadily losing control of the

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company unions, as demonstrated in last week's election in the tractor plant. These are the plants, comrades, where the strikes began in 1886 that led to the great Haymarket events, one of the storm centers of the general strike for the eight-hour day. The American workers are proving worthy of their great tradition.

We recall that several months ago a conference called in Gary for the unionization of the steel industry was hamstrung by the reactionary leaders in the craft unions, who placed their official interests above those of the masses of steel workers. This emphasizes how necessary it is to bring the problem of unionizing the steel industry into the locals and the central labor bodies, and how necessary it is for every trade union local to give its support. William Green is now attempting to line up these bodies against the C.I.O. and their proposed drive in steel. Our task is to mobilize the entire labor movement behind the steel workers and the C.I.O. for the unionization of the steel industry.

In this situation, the Communist Party is a recognized force. We are not passive in the struggle for unionizing this basic industry. Nor can we wait for things to happen spontaneously while we fall behind. We have a position and proposals. More than this, we have Communists in the mills and the unions. Therefore, we must become organizers in the mills, in every department, for the union and for resistance against intensified exploitation by the companies. Wherever we have done this we have won the confidence of many steel workers who are influential in the plants, in the company unions, and in the A.A. These people work willingly with us; nevertheless, we still lag seriously in our efforts to bring them into the Communist Party. To recruit these people, as, for example, in Gary, would mean a tremendous improvement in the composition of the Communist Party, bringing us close to the decisive native-born workers who must eventually constitute the leadership of the union and the Party.

The building of the Party apparatus in the steel sections, particularly in South Chicago and Chicago Heights, is an urgent necessity if we are to apply our basic method of concentration, and if we are to be in a position to influence the course of the organization drive.

Comrades, since the last Party convention, the political struggles within the country have become more complex. The forces of reaction and fascist trends have become more open and pronounced, while, on the other hand, farmers as well as sections of the city middle classes, intellectuals, civil employes, students, and liberal elements of various kinds, are beginning to move towards struggle

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together with the working class. This mass movement against reaction is making the Farmer-Labor Party a reality.

As a result of the growing united front sentiment, the workers and toiling population were able to wrest limited concessions from the national, state, and city administrations.

In Illinois, during this period, we saw the masses win the restoration of pay cuts for civil employes, the abolition of "payless pay days" for the Chicago teachers, limited old age pensions, improvements in price contracts from the trusts in the dairy farmers' strike, the recognition of many A. F. of L. unions through strikes, the gains of the general strike in Pekin and recently in the Chicago Heights plant of the Inland steel, the wage concessions and vacations with pay in many plants of the United States Steel Corporation. Through their national strike, miners also won concessions. In Illinois, there were 106 strikes during 1935, involving nearly 80,000 workers.

THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE ILLINOIS DISTRICT

In examining briefly the economic situation in our District in order to determine the possibilities of working in the factories, we find generally the following situation:

Production generally shows an upward trend; in some cases, as in steel and metal, a sharp rise is shown. The steel mills are working at 70 per cent of capacity, compared with 57 per cent last year. The metal trades have reached figures that in some cases are greater than in the years before the crisis.

In mining, 1935 production was 7 per cent over 1934. Consumption of electrical power has risen 8 per cent over 1934, reaching a point higher than at any time in the history of the state. Carloadings and revenue passengers are also taking part in the upward trend, but at the same time, as the comrades are aware from reading the press, with a drastic program for reducing employment in railroad terminals through consolidation schemes.

It is very important to note, however, that the increase in production remains uneven, failing to affect such basic industries as packing and building construction.

As we examine the new factors, several questions arise:

Point 1: What is the effect of this increased production on wage and employment levels? Does it provide the basis for rehiring the unemployed, estimated at more than 12,000,000 by the A. F. of L.?

Examination of the facts proves clearly that the increase in production provides no hope that a large proportion of the army of the unemployed will ever again find jobs.

Furthermore, the official figures prove that the present rise of

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production is taking place without a proportionate increase in jobs, due to the fact that the capitalist class, through speed-up, mechanization, new machinery, etc., is now able to wring more production out of each worker.

Point two: What is the effect of this increased production on the living standards of the masses?

In discussing this question, we must take into consideration, not only the conditions of the employed workers, but also the living conditions of the unemployed, and the generation of young jobless workers now growing up and ready to take its place in industry.

During the period of the crisis, wages were drastically slashed in every direction. In the recent period, there has been an uneven increase in wages in certain industries. But these slight wage increases here and there have been more than offset by the heavy increase in the cost of living which has affected all workers. In Illinois the Bureau of Labor Statistics points out that in Chicago food costs during the last year alone increased again by 10 per cent, and rents by as much as 15 per cent. In the Illinois coal fields, while wages increased nominally in the past three years by 19 per cent, and in packing by about 18 per cent, the cost of living in the same period has risen by 28 per cent, thus reducing the real wages of the workers in these basic industries.

A brief glance at the profit reports of the big capitalists reveals how extraordinary has been the harvest they have been reaping during the past year or two. Here we can see, as Lenin taught us in his studies of monopoly capital, the glaring parasitism of trustified capitalism, of the monopolies, which, while they boast of spreading social benefits, are reducing the living standards of the population. Monopoly profits and degraded living standards of the masses—these go hand in hand.

Point three: Does this increased production open the way, as the capitalist press states, to a new period of prosperity?

We have to remind ourselves of the analysis made by Comrade Stalin, and as shown in the Draft Resolution, that the economic changes in the crisis now take place within the permanent general crisis of capitalism, and that, as a result, the upturn which we are witnessing is of a special character that does not contain any basis for a return to the old periods of so-called prosperity.

On all sides we can see the criminal waste of human energy and human capabilities, in the break-up of families, in the increasing toll of disease, infant mortality, widespread undernourishment of working class children. A glaring contrast to the manner in which the Soviet Union, in the words of our great leader Stalin, "guards and treasures its most precious capital, human beings"!

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We can already see the first unmistakable signs of another strike wave as the workers of the country feel the unbearable pinch of rising living costs and the intensified speed-up in the factories.

Now more than ever it is necessary to work in the factories for the development of economic struggles for better wages, better conditions of work, remembering our basic tactic of concentration, as presented in the famous Open Letter.

With the workers returning to the factories, we have the possibilities and the task of strengthening our connections in the factories, to reassert and emphasize our leading role in the basic plants, to organize unions among the unorganized, to increase the number of our shop papers and strengthen our shop units. In the development of day-to-day struggles within the factories, we will provide a solid basis for our united front work.

POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS AND THE FARMER-LABOR PARTY

We have in Illinois a powerful group of reactionaries camped around the Hearst press, the *Chicago Tribune* of Col. McCormick, and the leadership of the Republican Party. This group locally represents the reactionary drive toward fascist reaction that is symbolized nationally by the Liberty League-Hearst-Landon combination.

In Illinois, the analysis of Comrade Browder on the relation of these reactionary forces to the two capitalist parties is particularly confirmed. For example, the Democratic forces, expressing support of the New Deal, have here in many cases direct links with the Liberty League forces. On the other hand, the Hearst-Liberty League forces have strong positions in the Democratic Party. In Chicago, for example, the Democratic Kelly-Nash machine, and in Indiana the Democratic machine of Governor McNutt, former National Commander of the American Legion, become instruments through which the reactionaries carry through their local measures. Was it not a Democratic-controlled Illinois Supreme Court that only last week affirmed the decision of a lower court barring newspapers published outside of Chicago from the streets? This is clearly aimed at the workers' press.

In Illinois, the Democrat Horner, an avowed Roosevelt man, is supported by the anti-New Deal Hearst press; and the Democratic Kelly-Nash machine is directly linked to and supported by the Republican McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*. State's Attorney Courtney, Democratic colleague of Horner, has the unanimous endorsement of the capitalist groups of whom Hearst and McCormick are the spokesmen.

In order to conceal the true character of their group as the

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organ of a handful of finance-capital monopolists, they are seeking to establish a social base among the middle class through a deceitful appeal to them as "taxpayers" belonging in the same propertied class with Hearst, du Pont, and Morgan. On the basis of such an appeal, it is reported that the Liberty League has recruited more than 5,000 in Evanston, a suburb of Chicago. This makes it important for us to develop our tax program, which is aimed against the monopolies, and to popularize those sections of it whose purpose it is to assist the "little man" against the monopoly.

The danger that the group of extreme reactionaries will succeed in corralling for their own uses the widespread disillusion with the present situation has been accentuated by the news that Coughlin, Townsend, and Reverend Smith, the inheritor of the Huey Long movement, are uniting in a so-called "third party" that will center its fire against the New Deal. This movement, which carries a radical label, is in reality playing into the hands of the Liberty League reactionaries. Comrade Browder warned at the time of the Townsend investigation that the "shameful" treatment meted out by the Roosevelt forces to the Townsendites created the danger that this mass movement would be driven into the lap of reaction. In the statements of Reverend Smith, we can see how cleverly these demagogues are utilizing the vacillations of Roosevelt toward the Right.

CURRENTS TOWARD LABOR'S INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION

The need for a decisive breakaway from the two old parties has become recognized by a section of organized labor in Chicago, which has already founded the Cook County Labor Party. At the recent Peoria conference initiated by this local party, the statewide Illinois Labor Party was formed; and now trade unionists all over the state are preparing to meet at the Second State Labor Party Conference to be held in Springfield on July 4-5. Latest reports indicate that this conference will be a great success.

When the Communist Party first issued the slogan for the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party some people thought that this was an empty slogan manufactured in the minds of the Communists. It did not take long, however, in our state, for life itself to prove that the contrary was true, that wherever the slogan was correctly applied the masses responded to this call for the breakaway from the old capitalist parties. In the daily struggle for the Farmer-Labor Party the slogan itself began to be broadened from the time it was first proposed by Comrade Browder at the National Congress for Unemployment Insurance in December, 1934. It rapidly became, under the pressure of the needs of the masses themselves, and the new

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factors in the situation, the inclusive slogan for the American People's Front.

The Labor Party movement is growing. The Chicago and Cook County Labor Party continues to get new affiliations from local unions, and the Illinois Labor Party has already affiliated to it not only many local unions, but also a number of important central labor bodies.

We also note widespread activity in the state for the Labor Party. Mass meetings are being held nearly everywhere, arousing enthusiasm and getting affiliations. In Gillespie, when some of the officials of the Progressive Miners of America Local No. 1 attempted to block affiliation, a referendum was conducted among more than one thousand members, with the vote overwhelmingly for the Labor Party. In a number of counties local Labor Parties have already been set up, as in Madison and St. Clair counties. In other places committees to promote the Labor Party have been formed, as in Montgomery County, Champaign, Decatur, Franklin County, etc.

At a recent meeting of the Chicago Federation of Labor, the Sewer and Tunnel Miners' Union Local No. 2 as well as the Upholsterers and Furniture Workers Local No. 18, introduced a resolution asking the Chicago Federation of Labor to sponsor the setting up of committees in each ward and precinct, "to strengthen and to uphold labor's resistance against impractical impositions upon the civil, social and economic rights of its members and friends". The resolution further empowers a committee in each ward and precinct to act as labor's representatives in the community "in all matters of civil, social, economic and political stress that call for or require public attention under instruction from the Chicago Federation of Labor Wards Committee". The Chicago Federation of Labor, while claiming that it is not within its "province" to set up such committees, nevertheless recommended that this resolution be sent to all local unions "for their consideration as applying to the members of their respective local unions to organize their members into precinct and ward organizations as set forth in the resolution".

The development of such a movement in all neighborhoods and communities is bound to strengthen the Farmer-Labor Party movement and broaden it into a real people's movement. The Communist Party believes that the trade unions in the various wards and precincts should take the initiative in setting up these organizations and, in the day-to-day activity, bring them into the main stream of the Farmer-Labor Party. This movement for independent political action will strengthen all the forces which are against reaction and fascism.

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Some may ask why it is that in Illinois the Labor Party is not growing more rapidly. We believe that this is due to a large extent to the present narrow structure of the Illinois and Chicago Labor Parties, that is, the provision in their constitutions that limits affiliation to trade unions. Because of this, the Labor Party has actually rejected support offered it from many quarters, such as unemployed groups, fraternal and mass language organizations, as well as political groups. It is certain that if the Labor Party broadened its basis it would not only strengthen its mass influence generally, but it would greatly increase its trade union affiliations and prevent masses from going to Coughlin, Lemke, and others.

Some people cling to the idea that this exclusion policy is necessary in order to guarantee a trade union base for the Labor Party. Whatever the intention of those who hold this theory, the effect is to work the opposite. For in the excluded groups there are many trade unionists and other people who have countless ties with trade union organizations or who exercise great influence in trade unions, and whose connection with the Labor Party would give greatly added strength to it in many unions where the Labor Party idea has not yet penetrated. Has not the experience in the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party shown that such a movement is greatly strengthened by the active affiliation and support of mass organizations?

There are a few in the Labor Party movement who say that the exclusion policy is needed in order to keep the Communists out, to "keep the Communists from capturing the Labor Party" or to keep the Labor Party "respectable" in the eyes of some of the more conservative labor officials who are still closely bound up with the old parties.

But even these people should know by this time that the Communists are among the most earnest fighters for the labor movement, proving this by their everyday deeds. These people should know that the Communists are an integral part of the working class and the labor movement, that such an attempt to set up discrimination in the labor movement can be of help only to labor's enemies. The fear of "capture by the Communists" is an old prejudice which is disappearing in practice, as an increasing number of groups cooperating with the Communists see how completely without foundation this prejudice is. The Communists want a broad Labor Party. We want to see a Farmer-Labor Party so broad that the Communists will be only a part of this inclusive movement.

Therefore, it is all the more surprising that our Socialist comrades, at their recent state convention, in a proposed draft resolution, could oppose a Farmer-Labor Party that would include in its ranks other than proletarians, even insisting against the word "Farm-

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er" in the name, excluding in this manner vast numbers of toiling farmers, mortgage-burdened homeowners, intellectuals, professionals, and other groups plundered by monopoly capital.

Is it not one of the fundamentals of Marxism that the proletariat must have allies in its struggles against capitalism, if this struggle is to be successful? We Communists believe in the capacity of the working class to lead all oppressed groups of the population against fascism. We do not fear that the working class will be submerged by these other groups, since the working class, by its very position in society, is equipped to be a steadfast and clear-sighted leader of all these groups. This conviction was strikingly confirmed by the recent triumphs of the People's Front in France and Spain. Why then should we fear to form alliances between sections of the population when we are capable of leading them and when they are so necessary for our successful advance?

The Labor Party took a step in Peoria that should be commended and encouraged, when it adopted the proposal to set up a Farmers' and Workers' Cooperation Committee, and left the way open for future affiliations of non-trade union bodies. Let us hope that the Labor Party will increase its efforts to bring into its ranks all these other groups. The Management Committee of the Illinois Labor Party is now ready to recommend to the coming conference that other organizations besides trade unions can affiliate to the Ward branches, with a proviso that such affiliations be limited to one-third of the membership and that the trade unions retain two-thirds of the voting strength. Even this is a progressive step and we welcome it.

We Communists will work as we have up to now to spare no efforts in winning new local unions for affiliation to the Labor Party.

Even with its organizational narrowness, the Illinois Labor Party has before it great possibilities of becoming a rallying point for the discontented people of the state, provided it steps forward and begins to take publicly definite positions on all the vital issues that face the people, such as the relief crisis, the sales tax, workers' compensation measures, pensions, and anti-labor legislation.

We reaffirm the position we took recently at our District Committee that it is still possible and necessary to place Labor Party ticket in the state elections, and that, should the July 4-5 Conference of the Labor Party at Springfield decide to place such a ticket, we would seriously consider the withdrawal of our candidates in order to throw the full weight of our support for a united election campaign behind the Labor Party ticket.

If only Congressional or local candidates on a partial ticket are decided upon, then we Communists would use all our efforts to

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bring about a united election campaign behind such candidates.

We can say that the Party in our District has grasped the significance of building the Farmer-Labor Party as our central task. A number of our Sections have helped to initiate such movements.

However, we must also recognize that in some concentration Sections, in very important territories of heavy industry, there has been a passivity in the work for the Farmer-Labor Party. The Gary Section should work to link the Lake County labor movement with the recently started statewide Labor Party movement that met at South Bend. In Southern Illinois there is a possibility for Labor Party organization in a number of counties, and in some places the committees for the promotion of Labor Parties should be transformed from mere propaganda committees to more active bodies actually working to organize the Labor Party.

Our immediate tasks are as follows:

1. To work for the success of the July 4-5 Conference of the Illinois Labor Party at Springfield.

2. To work for the affiliation of local unions and central labor bodies to the Illinois Labor Party and Cook County Labor Party; also to recruit individual trade unionists into the Labor Party.

3. To bring the problem of the Labor Party to all local unions, and to prepare for the election to the Illinois Federation of Labor convention of delegates pledged to support a Farmer-Labor Party.

4. To carry on independent activity by the Party organization to popularize the Farmer-Labor Party through meetings, leaflets, literature sales, etc.

5. To promote the election campaign in a way as to bring the Farmer-Labor movement before the masses, as it concerns itself with their everyday problems; this applies especially to the Townsend Clubs and other such mass movements.

6. To have the leading language committees break with their passivity and begin to enter the large mass organizations which are now dominated by the old party politicians, so that, through a bold application of the united front on immediate issues concerning the masses, they may begin a struggle to break these organizations away from the old parties.

7. To work for the endorsement of the American Youth Act by Labor Party groups and to raise special youth demands for the generation of first voters; to strive wherever possible to win the youth away from the influence of the old parties and set up youth committees for the Farmer-Labor Party.

PROGRESS IN ADVANCING THE UNITED FRONT

We have made definite progress in advancing the united front

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with the Socialist Party. This was very clear at the last Socialist Party State Convention, where the Militant group of the Socialist Party definitely defeated the reactionary Old Guard and themselves showed the achievements won in the united front for May Day. This was in marked contrast to their state convention of a year ago. This May Day we had united fronts in Chicago, Peoria, Indiana Harbor, Gillespie, and other cities. In Chicago, we had more than a dozen neighborhood meetings under joint Communist and Socialist auspices. The united front for May Day was an outstanding achievement for the Chicago working class and rallied great support from the trade unions and from many mass organizations that had never before been involved in joint action. The effect of this unity was immediately noticeable in many ways, rousing a spirit of solidarity throughout the organizations of the workers. For the first time in years, the Chicago City Council and the Police Department granted a permit weeks before May First, succumbing to the pressure of the united front. The same enthusiasm was present in the other cities, and the basis has been laid to extend this unity.

Our experiences in united fronts with the Socialists prove that we can exercise a strong influence on the labor movement. This was vividly illustrated some months ago when we had an understanding with the Socialists in the Chicago Federation of Labor in the fight to keep Charles Wills, a reactionary labor bureaucrat, from using the Federation for private electioneering on behalf of the Republican Party. As a result of this cooperation, the reactionaries were forced to beat a retreat, and the whole problem of the Labor Party was brought before the Federation in the sharpest manner.

It is necessary to note, however, that since their National Convention, the Socialists in our District have not taken any further steps to build the united front, some leaders even going out of their way to slander the Communists. There is also a tendency on the part of some Socialists to look upon the Farmer-Labor Party as a rival to their election campaign, thus taking a negative position on the Illinois Labor Party's participation in this election. Some comrades very easily become discouraged in the face of the vacillations and stubbornness displayed by Socialist leaders who call themselves militants. Our everyday experience and contact with the Socialist rank and file convince us that the leadership that stands in the way of the united front, or hesitates, is not voicing the sentiment of the Socialist membership in our District. We know that it requires a struggle to achieve and further the united front. This means more activity and work among the Socialist rank and file and the building of local united fronts in every neighborhood and locality. It is necessary also to remind the Socialists in a comradely way of the resolution that

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they adopted at the Illinois State Convention in which they expressed their willingness to form united fronts on specific campaigns or issues.

Without ceasing to point to the need for a formal united front between the two parties, we propose to the Socialists to get together on a number of important issues that now face the people of Illinois, such as the struggle against the state election law which requires a prohibitive number of signatures for working class parties; the campaign for the repeal of the sales tax; the struggle for relief; for the unity of the miners; for cooperation in organizing the unorganized steel, packing, and metal workers; and for furthering independent working class action through the Labor Party of Illinois.

In the recent period definite progress has been registered in our Negro work under the leadership of Comrade Haywood. Our Negro comrades are learning to work in the new way. This is reflected in our united front work around the National Negro Congress, where we are conducting a campaign against job discrimination, for the Randolph resolution in the A. F. of L., and for relief to the unemployed.

The united front developing around the issue of relief shows promising signs of reviving the unemployed movement of 1931, which shook the entire nation. Turning to the united front in other fields, we can note some good progress among many language groups.

In line with previous decisions of the Central Committee, we began work in building united fronts in the neighborhood among the Townsend Clubs, civic groups, parent-teachers' associations, women's clubs and auxiliaries, etc. However, we have to admit that up to now this basic task has not yet been seriously handled by our Party organizations. There are very few good examples of work in this field that we can bring before the Convention. In formulating our tasks for the united front, we will, in line with the discussion here today, reaffirm our previous decisions to work more seriously in the neighborhood organizations.

INTENSIFY THE WORK AMONG THE YOUTH

The American reactionaries used to feel secure in the face of what appeared to be the backwardness of the American youth. The youth of America have given the reactionaries a big surprise. Today, large numbers of youth are taking the path of progressive and militant action in the political life of the country. A mass movement is developing in support of the first youth legislation ever introduced into Congress, the American Youth Act. On April 22 one and one-half million student youth were involved in the student strikes against

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war. In our District the number of student strikers increased almost three-fold, from 6,000 last year to more than 15,000 this year. The growth of the progressive spirit among the youth permeates the religious organizations of the youth, as was witnessed in the numerous conferences called in Illinois, under the slogan "Christian youth building a new world", and in the recent decision of the national Y.W.C.A. organizations to affiliate to the American Youth Congress. The response of the Negro youth to the National Negro Congress showed us the mood of the Negro youth.

The ruling class fears these developments and is greatly concerned about keeping the youth chained to its influence and its two-party system. There is no doubt that the struggle as to who shall influence the youth will grow, with definite fascist organizations organizing to make a special drive to dominate the young generation. In our District, for example, the American Legion is proceeding with the creation of Junior Auxiliaries and establishing a summer training school for special leaders of this movement. In the colleges and universities, the Liberty League is subsidizing the formation of reactionary student organizations. The Nazis have increased their efforts to organize the youth into the nationalist youth of America. Have we not in these developments practical proof that the problem of winning the youth is an urgent task, not of the Y.C.L. alone, but of the entire Party and the working class?

The Party in our District took steps in this direction during the month of May, the special youth month. We organized mass meetings in some of the Sections. Many branches had discussions on youth problems. Some people were assigned to youth work, and an effort was actually made to understand the problems and tasks as well as methods necessary in our youth work. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, there is still the danger that these activities may be considered as part of a special campaign which is now over, and which can therefore be dropped. Our task must be to go forward from these beginnings and make our propaganda and organizations among the youth a daily part of our Party work. Whenever the comrades face a problem, or sit down to plan their work, let them make a deliberate effort to examine in what ways the given problem affects the youth.

To carry on effectively the work of promoting the united front:

1. All ward branches and Party units must continue their work of cooperation with the Socialist locals in their neighborhoods.

2. Every Section has abundant opportunities to develop united front movements against high rents, against the high cost of living, for local improvements, playgrounds, building of new schools, opening of beaches, municipal sanitation, etc., etc.

3. Among the Negroes in all Sections much more persistent

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efforts than at present are needed against discrimination and jim-crow practices. The program of the National Negro Congress provides a guide for this united front work.

4. Among the language population, the issue of protection for the foreign-born, the fight against the Hearst propaganda directed against "aliens" for deportations, can be seriously combated only through united front activity.

5. Among women, broad united front movements can be developed on such special problems as child health, birth control, legislation, clinics, hospitals, protection for women in industry, against militarism in the schools, etc.

6. United front work among the youth can be developed in the many settlement houses, community centers, youth auxiliaries, and churches. This is not the task of the Y.C.L. alone, but is a serious task of the Party as a whole.

In conclusion, comrades, as we face our tasks in the Chicago area, we can report that our recent District Convention showed how new, native forces from the basic industries are coming forward in the Party, and are being drawn into leadership. We have fulfilled our *Sunday Worker* quota twice above the original figure. Our Party organization has also improved, and our membership has increased, although entirely too slowly. Our dues payments today are above those of a year ago, even with the separation of Indiana from our District into a separate organization. The composition of the Party is changing. Over 70 per cent of our Chicago recruits are native, and an even greater percentage are young people under 35. I want to repeat that our growth is too slow and not in keeping with the possibilities. We will do all in our power to remedy this and speed the building of our Party into a mass party.

We face the class enemy strengthened with the latest victories of Soviet democracy, with the triumphs of the People's Front in France, Spain, and Mexico. Guided by the tested leadership of our Party, we will go forward to win the masses to strike real blows for the liberation of the people from the yoke of capitalism, to cement the unity of the toilers against fascism and war, for the victorious advance of the toiling people.

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Strengthening the Trade Union Backbone of the Farmer-Labor Party Movement in Ohio

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE report of Comrade Browder finds adequate foundations in the experiences and activities of the labor movement and of our Party in the State of Ohio, and we express our agreement with it and pledge it our full support.

What have been the developments in the working class and its organizations in Ohio since the last Party Convention?

After a period of militant struggles in the auto, rubber, and steel industries, of which the Toledo strikes were most outstanding, a certain lull set in. This coincided with the first pick-up in industrial production. In recent months we have experienced and helped organize a new upward militant swing in the labor movement. This found its first expression in Barberton, but was best dramatized by the Akron Goodyear strike which has meant for Ohio what the Frisco longshoremen's strike meant for the entire Pacific Coast.

The past year has been one of general strengthening of the labor movement in Ohio. The progressive forces defeated the reactionaries in such important Internationals as rubber and auto. The workers, especially in the mass production industries, hailed the organizing of the Committee for Industrial Organization with enthusiasm. A growing number of C.I.O.'s moved into the progressive column. In certain parts of the state a mass movement for unemployment insurance and revision of the Old Age Pension Laws has grown up, uniting large numbers of church organizations, fraternal organizations, trade unions, as well as the Socialist Party and the Communist Party.

Today Ohio stands out, not only as having had more strike struggles than any other state, but in the fact that these have occurred and are today occurring in the most decisive mass production industries, as in Akron, Barberton, Kent, and Portsmouth.

These developments reflected themselves in a growing, although confused, political consciousness among the toilers of Ohio. Much of it took on a purely anti-Liberty League character, and the Roosevelt demagogy had considerable influence amongst the trade unionists

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and W.P.A. workers. This political consciousness found organizational expression in the sweeping growth of the Townsend movement, in beginnings, although to a lesser extent, of the organizations of the Coughlin movement and similar types of organizations. There was increased political agitation everywhere, but the base of our Party was not alert enough to it. Tendencies favoring a Farmer-Labor Party were developing, but did not yet find organized expression on a state scale.

Our central aim is unity of action and unification and strengthening of the working class. Despite the confusion which exists, we definitely see the shaping of these forces. If properly influenced, they will not only entrench and strengthen the trade unions, with consequent improvement in the conditions of the workers, but will also achieve a mighty movement of independent political action of the toilers of Ohio.

What are these forces? The mighty strike movement as evidenced in Akron and the movement of solidarity of all labor developed around it. The increasing strength of the progressives, not only in local unions, but in central labor unions of the state and particularly in the rubber and auto industries, and in a number of craft unions in Cleveland and Toledo.

The growing consciousness of the need of fighting fascism in all its multiple manifestations; the mass movements, despite their confused character, for old age pension; the movement for unemployment and social insurance; the fighting moods of the W.P.A. workers—all these indicate the growing anti-capitalist sentiment developing in Ohio.

We have been a factor in these developments, despite outstanding shortcomings in our work, such as insufficient politicalization of our Party forces within the unions; the participation of only part of the Party in these various phases of mass work; no real Party growth in the basic industries and inside the A. F. of L., as well as a general weakening of our shop nuclei work.

THE PROGRESS OF THE FARMER-LABOR PARTY FORMATION

We set ourselves the task of intensifying and clarifying this anti-capitalist sentiment, of strengthening through struggle the workers' organization in defense of their daily interests and, above all, to mold all these forces into a mighty People's Front—a Farmer-Labor Party of Ohio.

Because of our inability to develop on a uniform scale a successful state-wide movement for a Farmer-Labor Party, as well as our neglect to win leadership and influence in local branches of the Townsend and Coughlin movements, we cannot expect a state

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Farmer-Labor Party ticket in Ohio this year. Already it is evident that the reactionary and careerist leaders of the Townsend and Coughlin movements are dissipating the fighting sentiment and organization of this movement which was a potential strength for a Farmer-Labor Party. Under the slogan of "Anybody but Roosevelt" the Townsend movement is trying to hitch these discontented masses to the reactionary Republican bandwagon.

Only in three localities have successful Farmer-Labor Party movements been developed so far. These are in Akron, Lake County, and Guernsey County. Our agitation for a Farmer-Labor Party has not been broad enough or energetic enough. On the basis of our experiences, we are firmly convinced that in almost every one of the other localities we selected to concentrate upon, namely, Mansfield, Belmount County, 21st Congressional District, and Youngstown, it would have been possible, and may yet be possible, to organize local Farmer-Labor Party movements, if we work more energetically.

In Akron, there has been launched, under the initiative of the Central Labor Union and with the participation of all the rubber locals and fully one third of the craft locals, a real, all-inclusive Congressional Labor Party, which has adopted a platform and a leading candidate, and which gives promise of sending to Washington this fall the first Ohio Farmer-Labor Party Congressman.

One of the sharpest debates was around the question involving the inclusion of the Socialist Party and Communist Party. The Central Labor Union delegation, along with other union leaders, took the floor, citing the work of the Communist Party in the Goodyear strike, and declaring, "if the Communists were good enough to be on the picket line with us, then they are okay in the Farmer-Labor Party".

Following the establishment of the Congressional Party, county conventions are being held or have already been held in Kent and Akron proper.

There were some evident weaknesses, which must be overcome, really to establish a Farmer-Labor Party which will have such support as to elect a Congressman. First, there was practically no farmer representation. Further, the Negro people, in so far as their established organizations are concerned, were not present.

A number of problems and lessons arise, as follows:

1. The fact that the initiative was taken by the C.L.U. lent great weight and served as a real unifying force, especially in bringing together the industrial and craft unionists. It also gave the movement that necessary authority, which broke, so far, all opposition. Here we see the importance of winning a C.L.U. for a progressive policy, through the activity of Party members and progressives.

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2. Without the strike experiences of Goodyear and Barberton, it would never have been possible to launch a local Labor Party. Only the practical experiences with the sheriff and the judiciary, who acted in the interests of the rubber barons, made that possible. However, our Party, throughout the entire strike, on the picket line, in radio speeches, and through its trade union leaders in the C.L.U., laid the foundation for this by partial agreements, winning many previously hostile elements.

Our Party must be on its toes and not think the battle is won, because it must be clear that we have not yet experienced a head-on clash with the old Party forces within the labor movement. Furthermore, it is not enough to win the local unions—we must win the local union membership. This means also repairing those obvious shortcomings of the Akron Farmer-Labor Party conference—the lack of fraternal, farmer, Negro, and youth participation. The Akron Farmer-Labor Party convention was a real tribute to the work of our Akron Party. But the job is just started.

Our original convention decision to utilize the Toledo C.L.U. resolution fell through, because of weaknesses in the Toledo trade union movement and insufficient pressure from the state as a whole. Only in connection with the Akron Farmer-Labor Party convention were the first successful state steps taken. The Akron and Barberton C.L.U.'s invited fraternal delegates from the state. Some 75 delegates responded from the C.L.U., including Toledo, Canton, Columbus, Lake County, Coshocton, Akron, Barberton, and Kent. The others were from scattered local unions, the most important being the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the I.L.G.W.U., and the United Auto Workers. Represented, too, were the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. A state promotional committee was set up, including all the important participants, for propaganda purposes, to stimulate local action and to mobilize the localities, so as to be able this very year to call a much broader gathering, and in this way isolate the Commonwealth Farmer-Labor Party group composed of people lacking in earnestness and who have been discrediting the movement until now.

We are striving to organize a state Farmer-Labor Party this year, even with a state ticket, for 1938.

S.P. ATTITUDE TO FARMER-LABOR PARTY DEVELOPMENTS

It is important to note the attitude of the Socialist Party with reference to these Farmer-Labor Party developments. Comrade Browder has explained the confused and sectarian attitude nationally. How does it express itself in disuniting the working class in Ohio—a so-called "Militant" state? At the state convention the issue was

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evaded, although a general resolution on the united front was adopted. At first, in Akron, when the question of the local Farmer-Labor Party was raised, the Socialist Party stated it was utopian to think the C.L.U. would initiate such a movement, and that they would not go along unless the C.L.U. was involved. With such a negative attitude, they did nothing to develop the movement. Once the organization was initiated by the C.L.U. they sent delegates. When we pressed for joint work, they warned about insufficient trade union base, and the danger of a replica of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party. In the convention itself, they adopted a sectarian Leftist position. After it is over, they are spreading rumors that it was only a Communist Party affair, and that, anyway, it hasn't got enough farmers' support or trade union representation to be a serious factor. Now the Socialist Party of Akron, upon the initiative of a handful of poisonous Trotskyites, sent a letter to the Akron Farmer-Labor Party withdrawing from it.

The Socialist Party in Akron, which is completely isolated from the big rubber unions and from the C.L.U., undertakes to judge and find guilty the Akron Farmer-Labor Party for not having sufficient trade union representation.

It seems that the Goodyear local union, which conducted such a heroic strike composed of 700 rubber workers, does not satisfy our Socialist comrades; nor the Goodrich local or the Firestone locals, which have 6,000 members each; nor the C.L.U., which has 103 local unions affiliated to it. Such type of criticism and policy on the part of the S.P. is unprincipled, leads directly to disuniting the working class, and only lends aid to the American Liberty League and the rubber barons. It furthermore dramatizes that the S.P., according to this exhibition, is not serious-minded even in its resolutions concernings an F.-L.P.

We must expose this position sharply, although we should at all times adopt the most patient attitude to winning the workers within or around the Socialist Party.

While organizing our work to achieve this objective, especially the organizing of the F.-L.P. in these localities on Congressional districts where we have failed to do so until now, we have made clear to the entire Party that our own independent Communist Party election campaign must go on.

We have already warned against the danger of neglecting to place local C.P. tickets in the field. It is our opinion that, except for localities and districts having F.-L.P. or labor tickets, the Party should run local candidates in order more successfully to mobilize the local working population for our state and national ticket and simultaneously develop the campaign for an F.-L.P. locally.

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PROBLEMS IN OUR TRADE UNION WORK

I now want to deal briefly with a few problems in trade union work. Since the last convention the auto and rubber unions have consolidated themselves with the previous federal locals united into internationals. The conventions of these two unions adopted a generally progressive position, and both of them, by substantial majorities, rejected the Green policy of appointing their officials and the demand for the expulsion of "Reds".

Especially important and decisive are the forward steps we have taken in developing progressive groups within the C.L.U.'s of Cleveland, Akron, Barberton, Youngstown, and Canton, as well as the growing influence which our Party is exercising within these.

This has made the C.L.U. a leading center for progressive policies in many cases, as in the instances of the Congress of the American League Against War and Fascism, the opposition to anti-labor films, the organization of general strike support in Barberton and Akron (in the case of Akron and Cleveland, despite the fact that at the time both were under reactionary leadership, the progressive influence was so great, that both these C.L.U.'s supported the John L. Lewis mass meetings.

We see the growing recognition within some sections of the trade union movement of the need for unity between Negro and white workers. In Cleveland, the Central Federation of Labor, the Painters' District Council, and the Machinists' Council have all endorsed the Randolph Resolution. In Akron, the Firestone local has set up a sub-committee dealing especially with the question of recruiting 3,000 Negro workers engaged in that plant. This work must be extended on a national scale and raised in the conventions of the various Internationals, particularly the machinists' union, which bars Negroes from holding membership.

In my general evaluation, let me say that we must take note of our serious shortcomings, such as:

1. The failure to tie up our increasing activity within the unions with the building of strong shop nuclei as the only guarantee of maintaining a class line within the unions and of winning the unions and shop workers for participation in all phases of the class struggle.

2. The inability on the part of our fractions within the C.L.U. to consolidate around themselves a strong progressive core and the failure on the part of our fraction members actively to participate in the C.L.U. meetings on the basis of all phases of the trade union movement. Here we see remnants of the old opposition tendencies, although in a different light.

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3. The failure to broaden out, although we have definitely improved and developed our trade union cadres. As a matter of fact, despite a number of successes in trade union work, we find that the Ohio District is still one of the poorest in its proportion of A. F. of L. members, who aggregate only some 30 per cent.

Our most important task in trade union work at the present moment is the organization drive in the steel industry. Suffice it to emphasize that this will not only be of importance as far as the steel workers themselves are concerned, but that such a drive will be felt everywhere. Furthermore, we must strive to have the C.I.O. unions become an organized force behind this drive, to have them take the initiative in winning the C.L.U. for endorsement and participation. It also involves the entire question of organizing the Negro workers, the youth, and of fighting for civil rights in these company towns.

Our greatest experience recently has been in the rubber and auto industries. Let me mention only a few points with reference to the Akron strike. The story of the strike—its victory and lessons—has already been dealt with in articles. At the time of the ending of the Goodyear strike, I quoted a strike leader as having said, "Don't worry, boys, we have just transferred the picket line from outside the factory to inside the factory". This they have actually done. Since then, it has been constant warfare, developing on an ever higher political level.

The rubber barons are determined to smash the unions. They are developing Law and Order Leagues—probably a hook-up of the Black Legion. Simultaneously they have organized Confidence Parades. But, inside the plants, they constantly try to intensify the speed-up and cut down the rates. It is around these questions, primarily, that the sit-down strikes have developed.

I think we must recognize the sit-down strikes of Akron as a new form of strike struggle, which will tend to appear everywhere. After long periods of unemployment, the workers instinctively want to hold their jobs. However, experience in Akron shows that these sit-down strikes at this stage of political development of the American workers are most effective for enforcing correction of an immediate grievance. It is not yet developed to the point of the workers staying in the factory for days or weeks and getting support from the outside. The Goodyear strike started as a sit-down strike, but when the food supply was shut off the men walked out and closed the plant. I think we must expect a widespread repetition of sit-down strikes, and should therefore draw lessons from Akron.

A few remarks on the question of the young generation. Our District is one of those that have a very poor record for work

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among the youth. This is not because there are no young workers in industry, or that there are no problems of the youth. The root of the question is that the Party, from top to bottom, has not yet fully mastered the understanding that the problem of winning the young generation is its responsibility. The participation of the youth in the rubber strike, particularly, shows us the great possibilities in this field. With the feeble efforts that have been made in connection with the coming American Youth Congress, we see that both the Party and the Young Communist League have in the past failed to get acquainted with the organizations of the young generation. In connection with the suggestion of Comrade Green to organize F.-L.P. Junior Sections, we are already orientating on this question as far as the Akron F.-L.P. is concerned, and will strive to win the leadership of that party for this policy.

PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND LEADING PERSONNEL

In conclusion, I want to deal with some problems of Party membership and personnel. In this coming period we must expect the development of mass struggles, not only on the part of the shop workers, but among other strata of the toiling population. In the course of these developments, we must expect new forms of struggle to develop. At the beginning some of these struggles will be of a defensive character. Instead of one Akron, we can expect the influence of the Akron strike area to spread to other industries. We also see new attacks by the bourgeoisie on all fronts. The sharpest expression of this is the present attempt to cut the average unemployment relief from $27 to $12 per month. There is also a new effort being made to collect old taxes and to foreclose property by the federal government, as a result of the Home Loan Act.

To meet this situation, we must have a well organized Party, based on revolutionary understanding and steeled in battle. With changed conditions, we must use new tactics of struggle. We must say frankly that our Party has been confronted with some serious shortcomings lately. To understand and to correct these weaknesses, we have to examine the years of growth of the bulk of our Party membership—the type of activity they were used to, the extent of their revolutionary training, and the development of leading personnel. What is this problem?

1. The bulk of the members have come to the Party during the period of economic crisis and depression.

2. Many of them were trained solely in the demonstrative type of activity, primarily amongst the unemployed, where we became expert organizers and demonstrators. Much of the response for other political demonstrations had as its core these same excellent

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unemployed fighters. They were in a struggle for existence. Our Party showed them the way. They got a hazy understanding of the Party, but no real fundamental understanding. Their enthusiasm came from their struggle for bread.

3. In the recent period, as we turned our attention to the trade unions, we recruited many excellent American trade unionists, including many leading elements. Their Party activity took on an essentially trade union character. They did not get a rounded-out picture of our Party as the revolutionary political leader of the entire working class, and did not see our general political responsibilities as a revolutionary Party. The good assistance we gave them in their trade union problems and struggles satisfied them as to the role of the Party. Outside of that, they saw carried on by another group of Party members demonstrative actions and big mass meetings or affairs, which they were willing to leave to someone else. Only in isolated instances was there a blending into a rounded-out Party understanding and activity.

4. Today, with almost every Party member re-employed in industry or on W.P.A. work, certain things are happening. As a result of being more economically independent, there is developing a different atmosphere among many Party members. There is a feeling of more family life, of the need for more time at home, for increased pleasure. While in the past their Party spirit, fervor, and attachment were kept up primarily through the demonstrations and similar type of activities in the struggle for existence, today this is no longer so. In other words, since we neglected adequate political training in the past, we now face a critical question of substituting revolutionary consciousness on the basis of Marxist-Leninist understanding for the purely spontaneous and elemental class feeling and spirit.

5. On top of all this, there are still remnants of sectarianism in some of our Party practices—lack of understanding of our united front policy. Within the Party itself, we have some organizational methods and practices which are not typical of any other American organization and are not at all necessary for effective work. Here I refer to the multiplicity of meetings without regard to specific purpose; a certain pyramiding of our meetings; the creation of functionaries who do not lead but are clerks; a dues system which is unknown in any other labor organization; an organizational structure which does not correspond to the political sub-divisions in which we must operate among the masses.

What is needed in this situation? Some comrades tried to solve the problem by mere organizational adjustments. However, this is not the solution. Some months ago we consolidated street units into

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larger branches; but precisely there, when it was approached as an overnight business and as a purely organizational question, we ran into trouble. Organizational shuffling is not the solution. First we must understand the roots of the problem. We must understand that the changed economic conditions have not eliminated the class struggle or the developing big class battles. We must prepare the Party for these—to give guidance and leadership, to become better entrenched, to grow stronger politically and organizationally. We must tackle the shop units and give them special attention. Similarly, the branches must be transformed into real political bodies of leadership and education for the members. Above all, we must devote special attention to training our best forces for leadership of the shop nuclei and the branches. When this political problem of leadership at the bottom is solved, then the solution of many other problems will be easier. We do not want less work but fewer meetings which achieve nothing. We want more productive activity, a higher type of work from every Party member. If we coupled that with effective recruiting, especially of shop workers and trade unionists, and promoted a real system of education connected with the day-to-day work, we would effect a change in the Party. All this does not mean a loosening up of Party organization or less discipline. On the contrary, with a better politically developed membership, we will have a higher quality of work and more effective discipline.

This only emphasizes the necessity for every District to develop a consistent personnel policy as outlined in the report of Comrade Krumbein. It becomes clear that we are passing through a new phase of development of our personnel. Some difficulties arise because, in the process of developing new leadership, we have tended to lean backwards in avoiding sharp political criticism. Our main line of developing leading forces, however, has been correct. What is necessary is to speed up this development on the basis of a more consistent conscious political and comradely approach to all sections of the leadership.

Side by side with this, however, we must demand from the members of our leading committees more than we do from the new members of our Party. Only with this approach can we hammer out a real capable and able Party leadership.

We delegates from Ohio feel that our work is still inadequate. We will return from the Convention of our Party determined, on the basis of the splendid report of Comrade Browder and the decisions of the collective will of our Convention, to be in the forefront of the concentration Districts of our Party in fulfilling the decision of this historic Ninth National Convention.

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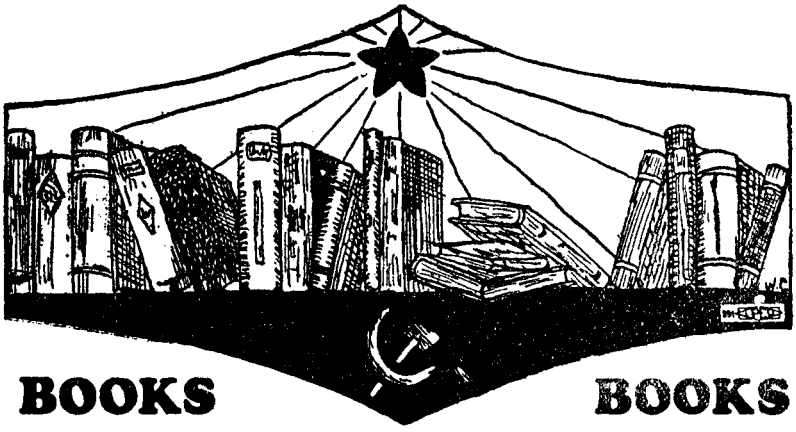

THE CLOSE OF AN EPOCH OF MARXIST RESEARCH

KARL MARX, the Story of His Life. By Franz Mehring. Covici-Friede, New York. 601 pp. Price $5.00.

Reviewed by H. M. WICKS

A DECADE and a half after the death of Franz Mehring, the indomitable fighter who, together with Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, and Clara Zetkin, held aloft the banner of proletarian internationalism in Germany during the World War, we have available in English the culmination of his historical work, his story of the life of Marx.

This is a work that closes an epoch in Marxist research, summing up the period from 1890 to 1918. Since the publication of the first German edition of the work there has been established the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow which has collected a wealth of material and which fully proves the incorrectness of the position of the author in regard to the attitude of Marx and Engels toward Bakunin, Lassalle, and Schweitzer. These facts, brought to light since the death of Mehring, are dealt with in an appendix prepared under the direction of Mehring's literary executor, Eduard Fuchs.

Mehring's book is much more than the biography of one man. It is, for the most part, a brilliant application of historical materialism to the development of two men who personified in their own lives and activity the struggles and aims of the proletariat over half a century.

In its fifteen chapters covering 601 pages the reader sees the historical development of the theory and practice of the modern revolutionary movement. We are first introduced to the youthful Marx, a student of history, philosophy, and jurisprudence, emerging as the ablest of a circle of young Hegelians. Even then—1838 to 1842—Marx saw the fundamental contradiction between the *system* of Hegel and the Hegelian *method*. Hegel's system, his conception of the development of the objective idea as an uninterrupted process which determined historical evolution was rejected by the Young Hegelians, who were aware of the contradiction that Hegel fell into when he made the state of Frederich-Wilhelm the culmination of that process. They realized that any attempt to bring to a close the historical movement was in irreconcilable conflict with the method of Hegel, *i.e.*, the dialectic method.

It was during this period that Marx was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Jena on the basis of a written "dissertation

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dealing with the differences between Democritean and Epicurean philosophy". Mehring shows how Marx, in this work, was still "completely on the idealist basis of the Hegelian philosophy". Then, for more than a hundred pages the author reveals, step by step, the emerging of what has come to be known as Marxism.

Undoubtedly Mehring has surpassed any other biographer of Marx and Engels in dealing with these earlier years. We see Marx involved in editing the liberal bourgeois paper, *Rheinische Zeitung*, in Cologne; staying in Paris where he contributed to the *Vorwaerts* and, with Arnold Ruge, editing the *German-French Yearbook*, studying French Socialism and Communism. We see him meeting Engels, with whom he collaborates in writing *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*, which marked a definite break with the Hegelians (Feuerbach, Stirner, etc.).

First we see the great influence that Feuerbach's work, *The Essence of Christianity*, exerted upon Marx; then we see Marx impelled beyond Feuerbach by his observation and participation in the social movement, and by life itself. From that time onward the development is rapid and uninterrupted toward the epoch-making contribution of Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*. The discussions with Weitling and Proudhon and the polemics against them; the publication of the *Poverty of Philosophy;* the activity of the Communist League; the lectures on protection, free trade, wage labor, and capital—these activities taking place against a background of intensifying class struggles, reveal the historical setting that ushered in the epoch of *The Communist Manifesto*. In this part of his work Mehring achieved the difficult feat of presenting in a live, understandable way the essence of the controversies that gave rise to the earlier polemical writings of Marx and Engels.

Mehring, unlike many other biographers of Marx, gives credit to Engels for his special contributions. For example, the author shows how Engels, in his first important work, *The Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*, arrived independently at some of the basic principles of historical materialism. Mehring characterizes this work as "epoch-making" and as "the first great document of scientific socialism". This approach of Mehring is in striking contrast to those alleged historians who attempt to sever the unity of Marx and Engels—"historians" of the type of R. W. Postgate, whose book, *Out of the Past*, takes the greatest pains to belittle Engels; or of John Spargo, the Anglo-American renegade who, while a leader of the Socialist Party, wrote a book called *The Life of Marx*, that ranks with the grossest misinterpretations of Marxism.

In depicting the relationship between Marx and Engels the author reveals the self-sacrificing devotion of these implacable revolutionists to the task of developing the theory and practice of the proletarian revolutionary movement. Throughout the work he interweaves the story of the personal lives of the two men, the terrible hardships Marx and his family endured and the matchless loyalty of Engels through the decades of their collaboration.

The years of struggle, embracing the period of the writing of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, the *Eastern Question*, and other correspondence to *The New York Tribune*, to the completion of Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, are set forth with dramatic skill seldom surpassed in biographical writing.

The chapters on the founding, the history, and the decline of the First International contain a wealth of information, while avoiding many of the errors of Stekloff's history.* The latter, whose work is familiar to all Marxist-Leninists, confuses the relationship between the political and the economic

* G. M. Stekloff, *History of the First International.*

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struggle by stating that: "The political struggle as a means is subordinated to the economic struggle of the proletariat." In Mehring's book we see that Marx said nothing of the sort. In Marx's discussion of the statutes of the First International, he said something quite different:

> "The economic emancipation of the working classes is, therefore, the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinated as a means."

It is almost inconceivable that one writing a history of the First International should confuse the economic *struggle* of the working class with the economic *emancipation* of the working class.

In the pages on the First International we find in Mehring's book a wealth of material regarding the labor movements in those countries having affiliated sections. There are special sections on England, France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Germany. A number of facts not generally known in connection with the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 are brought forward, especially in regard to the activity of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel.

But the parts of the work dealing with the Paris Commune are weak and in many respects erroneous. In dealing with Marx's famous address to the General Council of the International on *The Civil War in France*, the author commits a very grave error. It consists in repeating the revisionist theory that there is a contradiction between the position of Marx and Engels as set forth in *The Communist Manifesto* and the one expounded in their estimate of the Paris Commune. On page 477 Mehring says:

> "The way in which the address dealt with these details (state form and relationships) was brilliant, but there was a certain contradiction between them and the opinions previously held by Marx and Engels for a quarter of a century and set down in *The Communist Manifesto*. They held that one of the final results of the future proletarian revolution would certainly be the political dissolution of that political institution known as the state, but this dissolution would have been gradual. . . . They had pointed out that . . . the working class must first of all seize the organized political power of the state and use it to crush the resistance of the capitalists and reorganize society."

In another place in the same chapter Mehring returns to this argument. This proves that Mehring, staunch fighter that he was against the perfidy and betrayals of official Social-Democracy, was unable to rid himself of Social-Democratic illusions regarding the bourgeois state and that he failed to perceive one of the basic reasons for the struggle of Marx and Engels against Lassalle and Schweitzer on the question of the possibilities of using the bourgeois state machine as an instrument of proletarian revolution. This inability to perceive the real basis of this conflict explains the wrong position Mehring takes elsewhere in his book in defending Lassalle and Schweitzer.

To be sure, *The Civil War in France* goes further than *The Communist Manifesto*, inasmuch as it reveals more concretely the final state type—the dictatorship of the proletariat—through which the working class will achieve its emancipation. While *The Communist Manifesto* did not use the words "dictatorship of the proletariat" it is clearly implied in the following passages:

> ". . . the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class, to establish democracy.
>
> "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by

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> degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize the instruments of production in the hands of the state, *i.e.*, of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."*

Marx and Engels, in the authors' preface to the 1872 edition of *The Communist Manifesto* emphasize the fact that what the Paris Commune taught the world working class was that the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made machinery of the capitalist state but must shatter it. Between the position of 1848 and 1872 there is, *not contradiction*, but a further development of the Marxian teaching on the state.

In his celebrated passage in *The Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875) Marx says:

> "Between capitalist and communist society lies a period of revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds also to this a political transition period during which the state can be nothing else than the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."**

Certainly, nowhere in The Communist Manifesto, or elsewhere, did Marx or Engels ever assert or imply that the proletariat can use the bourgeois state as the instrument for achieving its emancipation.

That Mehring did not perceive clearly the nature of the state of the transition period from capitalism to communism is further emphasized by the fact that in dealing with Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* he did not even mention what Marx said about the state type of the revolutionary transition period—the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead Mehring commits another blunder and assails Marx for criticizing in that programmatic document Lassalle's "iron law of wages" theory, claiming that Lassalle had copied the theory from *The Communist Manifesto*.

In general the author fails to maintain, in the final chapters of his work, that scientific approach that makes his earlier chapters outstanding. Notwithstanding the fact that Mehring in his final years came closer and closer to the position of Marxism-Leninism, there were still in him Lassallean vestiges needing to be overcome. Not only did he defend Lassalle-Schweitzer, but he also defended Bakunin.

To be sure there were not available to Mehring the facts we now possess regarding Lassalle and Bakunin. But neither was such information accessible to Marx and Engels, yet they correctly dealt with these people on the basis of the political consequences of their activity. In the appendix to Mehring's book, his literary executor, Eduard Fuchs, says on page 580: "Mehring's attitude toward Lassalle-Schweitzer and their policy is no longer tenable today." And then on page 582 he further says: "Mehring's attitude to the conflict between Marx and Bakunin in the First International is also untenable today." Eduard Fuch's formulation is open to criticism. Mehring's attitude in regard to these "quarrels" as he prefers to call them, never was tenable. While the documentary revelations are attesting evidence, the primacy rests in the political incorrectness of Lassalle and Bakunin.

Disclosures made since the death of Mehring only confirm the conviction of Marx and Engels that Lassalle and Bakunin were elements that had to be relentlessly combated. The appendix to Mehring's work contains

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* *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 30. International Publishers, New York.

** Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program*, pp. 44-45. International Publishers, New York.

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valuable material revealing details regarding Lassalle and Bakunin. On opening the archives of the tsars, the Soviet research staff engaged in that work unearthed letters written by Bakunin to the tsar which revealed him, in spite of his "revolutionary" ranting, as one who utterly debased himself before the Romanoff monsters. On September 15, 1851, Bakunin wrote to the tsar saying he deplored "as a penitent sinner" his revolutionary career.

Lassalle's position that all other classes constituted one reactionary mass in relation to the proletariat led those who accepted it to combat any efforts toward unity of action of the workers with the peasants. Such a theory would alienate the peasantry from the position of allies of the working class and drive them toward the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie. It would make impossible even the first steps toward establishing hegemony of the proletariat over other elements of society in combating any form of reaction —either feudalism or the fascist tyranny of monopoly capital endeavoring to perpetuate a decadent capitalism. In combating theories the whole effect of which was to paralyze effective action on the part of the working class, Marx and Engels were relentless. Mehring's book proves this, but he falls into the error of arguing against the evidence he himself has compiled. The reader, however, with the use of the appendix, will be able to obtain a correct estimate of the merits of the theoretical conflicts and will certainly not accept Mehring's estimate of Lassalle and Bakunin.

Mehring's book is exceedingly valuable for its mass of material and for its treatment of the beginnings of Marxism. It surpasses any comprehensive work thus far published on the life and activity of Marx, and no future historian will ever approach a similar task without using most of the basic material used by Franz Mehring. But praiseworthy as the work is, for the most part, there still remains the task of producing a genuinely comprehensive Marxist analysis of the lives of the two great founders of our movement. Such a work must, of necessity, avoid Mehring's errors and carry out consistently, to the end, the development of the theory and practice of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

AMMUNITION FOR THE ELECTION AND OTHER CAMPAIGNS

LABOR FACT BOOK III. Prepared by Labor Research Association. International Publishers, New York. Price $1.00.

Reviewed by H. M. WICKS

FOR the third time the staff of Labor Research Association has brought out an inexpensive handbook of facts and figures that can be used effectively in a large variety of agitation and propaganda activities. The facts presented are obtained from such sources that the book will be found especially useful to labor organizations and their representatives in wage disputes.

That such a work is necessary is proved by the response to the two previous editions. With such facts the working class agitator, propagandist, lecturer, and teacher can prepare convincing arguments.

Although it may not have been specially prepared for that purpose, the present work is, nevertheless, an invaluable source of material for use in the national election campaigns just now under way in the United States. Do you desire to present facts regarding the progress of "recovery" during the past two years since the Congressional elections? Detailed facts and figures

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are available in this well-indexed book. You do not have to guess about whether or not real wages have kept pace with increased production. You can prove, with the aid of the *Fact Book*, that what increase there has been in real wages from 1932 to 1936 is negligible compared to the increase in production per man during the same period.

The Roosevelt "recovery" program is also put to the test of economic analysis, and abundant proof is furnished of how the "New Deal" pours millions upon millions into the pockets of the bankers, the munition and armaments makers, while its relief appropriations and standards of wages on federal projects are utterly inadequate.

In revealing facts of the "recovery" program the staff of Labor Research Association exposed the shallowness and absolute falsity of the much-talked-of report of the Brookings Institution, showing that their figures on "production capacity" are based on industry operating on a single-shift basis, instead of operating full time (three or more shifts). It would have been more helpful if those who prepared the book had gone more fully into this question, along the lines pursued by Comrade E. Varga in one of his quarterly reviews in *International Press Correspondence* last year.

The "New Deal" legislation is carefuly analyzed and the so-called "security" acts of the administration are compared to the Workers' Social Insurance Bill. This section concludes with a survey of the Supreme Court encroachments upon social and labor legislation.

If one want to know the facts regarding the Liberty League, its origin, history, policies and the names and connections of its Wall Street backers, *Labor Fact Book III* is invaluable. In the chapter on "Civil Rights and Fascist Trends" that nefarious organization is properly branded for what it really is —an outfit of strikebreakers, war-profiteers, corporation lawyers, industrialists, bankers, pen prostitutes, forgers, warmongers who are out to destroy every vestige of democratic rights for which the American people have fought since colonial days.

In that same chapter Coughlin's "National Union for Social Justice" is dealt with, as well as the special activities of the odoriferous William Randolph Hearst and some of his galaxy of liars and plain inventors that serve in his journalistic lie-factories. Twenty-seven other organizations of a viciously reactionary character are carefully documented. Hence, there is to be found in that chapter ample material for exposing the Republican Liberty League-Hearst combination in this election campaign.

As a measure of the degree of reaction and fascist trends in general are valuable detailed tables recording the use of armed forces to break strikes, the number of workers killed in labor struggles, their names and the dates and places such fatalities occurred. Such figures are invaluable in arousing the masses to united struggle against the menace of fascism in this country.

As indicating the means by which the toiling masses can defeat reaction there is a special chapter on the united front. It deals with the attempts in the United States to build a united front against reaction, fascism and war; the crisis in the Socialist Party; the correspondence between Communist and Socialist leadership on the question, and an analysis of the Farmer-Labor Party movement.

There are special chapters or sections of chapters on farmers and farm workers, women, the youth, deportation of foreign-born, anti-alien bills, and other special reactionary measures introduced in Congress and the various state legislatures. With such facts it is possible, in the various states, to fire heavy barrages against the local politicians who have supported such measures, and this book should be made use of for this purpose by the Districts and Sections of the Communist Party in this election campaign.

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Besides the chapter on the united front, which appears for the first time in the *Labor Fact Book*, there occurs also a detailed analysis of the condition of the professional worker. There is also, for the first time, a section dealing with Soviet China, in the chapter on "Soviet States". The first part of the chapter presents an array of data concerning the further advance of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., with a special section devoted to the Stakhanov movement, and a highly important section on the new Soviet Constitution.

There are certain shortcomings that might easily have been avoided. For example, on page 35, in the passage dealing with taxation, we are told that a "tax on an industrial or commercial plant is reckoned as part of the cost of production and passed on to the consumer in the higher price of the product or services rendered". This might better have been qualified so as to allow for the fact that competition may in some cases force the producer to absorb the tax without raising prices.

Another error of a factual nature is made in the assertion that the nation-wide textile strike of September 3-22, 1934, was "the largest single strike ever to take place in this country". As a matter of fact the strike of 580,000 coal miners which began on April 1, 1922, still holds that record. Also, in 1922, while the miners' strike and the railwaymen's strike of some 400,000 were on, there ensued a strike of 250,000 textile workers, making 1922 the greatest year of simultaneous strike struggles, as far as numbers go, this country has yet seen. This can easily be verified by consulting our press and the bourgeois press of 1922.

Apart from these minor errors the factual material, covering the past two years, is unassailable. There exists no other research organization comparable to the Labor Research Association, and no one who desires to avail himself of unimpeachable factual material on the subjects covered in their *Labor Fact Book III* can afford to be without it.

A CORRECTION

In our May issue we presented Lenin's article, "The Working Class and Neo-Malthusianism", Englished for *The Communist* by Comrade A. Markoff, as "hitherto untranslated into English". It has since been drawn to our attention that we were preceded in the English publication of this significant Lenin article by our brother British periodical, the *Labour Monthly*, in its issue of October, 1927. We take this occasion to publish the correction.—(*Editors.*)

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